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# THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

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# CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

BY

LYMAN ABBOTT

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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1905

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*To the Christian Ministers who are attempting to impart that acquaintance with God which is the secret of life this volume is dedicated.*

# PREFACE

MINISTERS in their conventions often discuss the question why people do not go to church. It would be well if sometimes they would consider the question, Why do any people ever go to church? for the phenomenon of church-going is a remarkable one.

In the fall of 1903 a careful census was taken of the attendance upon church services in the Borough of Manhattan, in the city of New York. The Borough was divided into four districts, and the numbers in actual attendance upon the churches, liberal and conservative, Protestant and Catholic, were carefully counted. Fortunately the four Sundays devoted to this census were pleasant Sundays, so that the conditions were favorable to a good attendance. The census was taken with care and the results tabulated. They showed that about one half the adult population of the island of Manhattan were in the churches on those Sundays. No estimate was made of the children in attendance upon the Sunday-schools. In considering the significance of this census, it must be remembered, on the one hand, that every person in attendance upon

every service was counted, so that any person who attended church twice on that day was counted as two persons; on the other hand, that those accustomed to attend church who were absent on the day the count was made, those who do business in New York and live in the suburbs, and the Jews, of whom there are six hundred thousand resident in the island of Manhattan, were not included in the census. Making due allowance for these facts, it is probably fair to say that, approximately, half the population of the island, above school age, are accustomed to take part in some form of religious service every week. A little subsequently, a more careful census of church attendance was made in the city of London. A careful estimate of those who attended two services was included in this census. The result showed that, making allowance for those too old, too young, too sick, and too busy, — that is, in unavoidable occupations, — and not counting twice those who attended twice, one third of the population who can attend public worship in London on Sunday do attend. These facts are typical. In all ages of the world, among all races of mankind, attendance upon some form of religious service is customary. It would be difficult to mention any other custom so general.

What is the motive that brings so large a proportion of the human race for a certain allotted time every week into their various temples, synagogues, and churches? The city of New York may be not inaptly termed the Corinth of America. Both its virtues and its vices are those of a commercial metropolis. Its inhabitants through six days in the week are eager in their pursuit of wealth. They jostle one another in the cars and upon the sidewalk; they travel wearisomely an hour or two every day from their homes to their places of business and back again; they work often in dingy rooms and under disagreeable conditions; they sacrifice for this pursuit pleasure, education, domestic affection, health, and life itself; and yet once a week stores and offices are closed, the process of money-getting halts, the throngs lay aside for a day their commercial pursuits, and something like one half of them assemble in their churches. For what purpose? It is idle to say that this is a fashion. How came the fashion to be set? Or that it is a habit. What has caused the habit? They are not attracted by the music: they can get better music in the concert-rooms; nor by the oratory: for few of the preachers are orators; nor by the social advantages: for the

city church is rarely a social club, and never a successful one.

The object of this book is to furnish some answer to this question; to indicate to priests and preachers what it is which induces half the population of New York city to lay aside their commercial pursuits and gather in their churches every seventh day; to interpret to themselves the men and women who form these congregations, and explain to them what it is that they are often unconsciously seeking; and to indicate to those who rarely or never do go to church the advantage which they might secure if they were in this respect to conform to the custom, not only of their fellow countrymen in America, but of their fellow men throughout the world.

The Christian minister fulfills a fourfold function: he is pastor, administrator, priest, and prophet or preacher. As pastor, he is the personal friend and counselor of his people; as administrator, the executive head of his church, which should be his force as well as his field. These two aspects of his work are not considered in this volume; it is devoted exclusively to a consideration of the minister as priest and prophet.

In the fall of 1903 I gave the Lyman Beecher course of lectures before the Yale Theological Sem-

inary, at New Haven, and in March, 1904, the Earl course of lectures before the Pacific Theological Seminary, at Berkeley, California. While this book is not a reproduction of either course of lectures, both of which were given extemporaneously, the material of which those lectures was composed has been freely used in the composition of this volume, as has also some other material contributed by me at different times to periodical publications or used in public and published addresses.

LYMAN ABBOTT.

CORNWALL-ON-THE-HUDSON, N. Y.,
*December*, 1904.

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# THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

## CHAPTER I

### THE FUNDAMENTAL FAITHS OF THE MINISTRY

EVERY vocation in life assumes as axiomatic certain fundamental principles on which that vocation is founded. Any man who doubts those fundamental principles should not choose that vocation. No one should enter the army if he entertains doubts respecting the right of society to use force. He cannot be enthusiastic as a soldier if the theory of non-resistance, as it is expounded by George Fox and Leo Tolstoy, has any place even in his subconsciousness. No man should enter the legal profession if he regards philosophical anarchism as even a possible social hypothesis. He who is a disciple of Prince Kropotkin, or is inclined to be, cannot be a good lawyer. Christian Scientists hold either that the body and bodily ills have no real existence, or that both are emanations of the mind, and, as a consequence, that all so-called bodily ills are to be cured merely by right thinking. No man to whom this seems a possible hypothesis should enter the medical profession. There are communists who believe with Proudhon that the holding of private

property is wrong, that all property should be held in common. One who shares this opinion, or even regards it as worthy of serious consideration, ought not to enter on a mercantile career, for the commercial world is based on the assumption that the acquisition of property is right, and that the ambition to acquire property is a just and laudable ambition.

So there are certain principles or doctrines which underlie the Christian ministry. They are its fundamentals, its axioms. They must be vital convictions in the soul, or the man is unfit to be a minister; as unfit as a communist to be a railroad president, or an anarchist to be district-attorney, or a Christian Scientist to be a medical practitioner, or a non-resistant to be a soldier. The Christian minister purposes to dedicate his life to the ministry of religion; therefore he must not merely believe in religion; that belief must be an unquestioned conviction, as clear, as definite, as positive in his experience as is belief in the reality of bodily ills in the mind of a physician, or belief in the legitimate use of force to resist wrongdoing in the mind of a soldier. What, then, is religion?

To enter at all adequately upon the religious history of the world for the purpose of determining by a fresh investigation what is the nature of religion as a vital force in human history would take me too far from my immediate theme and require too large a proportion of this volume; to enter on this history but casually would be useless. Instead,

I accept two definitions which other investigators have given to the world, and which seem to me, after such study of comparative religions as has been practicable for me, to be the best which the philosophy of this subject affords. The first, by a divine of the seventeenth century, is popular; the second, by Max Müller, is philosophical; the former lays stress on religion chiefly as a motive power; the latter, chiefly as an intellectual apprehension; the former needs for exactness further defining; the latter is possibly too definite to be entirely adequate. He who wishes to inquire for himself what is religion will find the material for such inquiry in the volume from which the second of these two definitions is taken.

Henry Scougall defines religion as "the life of God in the soul of man."[1] In this definition he assumes that God is, and that he has such vital relations with man that the life of God may enter into and affect the life of man. Max Müller concludes that "religion consists in the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man."[2] In this definition he also assumes that the Infinite is, and is an object of perception by man, and that this perception by man of the Infinite constitutes a motive power which enters into his life and affects his moral character.

[1] Henry Scougall: *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, A. D. 1671.

[2] Max Müller: *Natural Religion*, p. 188.

In this volume I shall assume the correctness of these two propositions. I shall recur to them again and again by way of illustration, and for the purpose of confirming certain conclusions to which they necessarily lead every thoughtful man who accepts them; but I shall make no attempt to prove their truth. I assume, as the postulates on which this volume is founded, first, that God is an object of perception; that he can reveal himself directly and immediately to man; and that man has the capacity to perceive him, either directly and immediately, or indirectly and mediately through such revelation; and, secondly, that if God is thus perceived the perception will affect for good or ill the moral character of the man thus perceiving him, the nature of that effect being primarily dependent upon the clearness and the accuracy of man's perception of the Infinite.

This definition of religion implies that the Infinite is really perceived, not merely imagined. If he is not really perceived, there is no real religion; there is only a deception or an illusion. What is called religion is of all vital phenomena the most widespread and the most influential. Neither art, music, literature, commerce, nor war has done so much to determine the destiny of the nations as religion, because religion has itself determined their art and their music, pervaded, if it has not created, their literature, regulated their commerce by the obligatory ideals which it has imposed on them, and some-

times incited them to war, sometimes mitigated it or restrained them from it. I shall assume that this phenomenon is not due to a deception or an illusion, but is the result of a real, though always partial, often obscure, and sometimes perverted perception of the Infinite. I shall assume the reality of religion.

This definition of religion implies more than a perception of moral ideals, personified under the general title of God. Perception of God means more than a perception of the good; faith in God means more than belief in justice and mercy. It means belief in a just and merciful Person. "Moral Idealism," truly says James Martineau, "is not Religion, unless the ideal is held to be *Real* as well as *Divine*." Religion is more than a perception of an ideal moral principle which exists only in the minds of those who perceive it; it is the perception of a real moral principle superior to and independent of all humanity, which, if it really exists at all, must exist in some moral Being. Religion is more and other than ethical culture. The minister of religion must have more than a perception, however vivid and controlling, of ethical principles. He must have a perception of a Person who is controlled by ethical principles and whose action manifests them.

This definition of religion implies more than a

[1] James Martineau: "Ideal Substitutes for God," *Essays*, iv, 278.

belief in the reality and influence of what is called religion in human life. To perceive in religion only a phenomenon in human history is to perceive only a phase, however important, of human experience ; but religion involves a real perception of the Infinite as the cause of religious experience. One may believe in religious phenomena, without believing that a real perception of the Infinite is the cause of religious phenomena. Such a belief in the reality of religious phenomena will suffice to make the believer a teacher of comparative religions, but it will not suffice to make him a minister to the religious life. To be such a minister he must perceive the Infinite manifesting himself in the religious life.

This definition of religion implies more than belief in an hypothetical Creator conceived of as a necessary supposition in order to account for the creation, as a scientist conceives of ether as a necessary supposition to account for the phenomena of light. It implies more than a rational conclusion that God exists ; it implies a perception of God as a living Being recognized by the spirit of man. Deism is not religion. The philosophical conclusion that God exists is not sufficient to make a man who has reached that conclusion a minister of religion. He must have a perception of the living God, not merely a conception of a theoretical God.

Finally, this definition of religion implies more than the perception of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed. Awe in the

presence of mystery is not religion. Religion is such a perception of God as affects the moral character of man; it must therefore be the perception of God as a Personal Being, not as an impersonal Force. By a Personal Being I mean a Being who thinks, feels, and wills. Religion is a life in ourselves produced by our perception of Another under such manifestations as influence our moral character, that is, our thinking, our feeling, and our wills; but if it is to influence our thinking, our feeling, and our wills, it must be a perception of One who himself thinks, feels, and wills. The minister of religion must have, therefore, not merely an intellectual apprehension of God; he must have a moral perception of God. He must so perceive him that by that perception his own thinking, feeling, and will are modified, clarified, purified, strengthened. There must be in some true sense a reception as well as a perception of God. Or, to recur to the other definition, he must have some measure of the life of God in his own soul, if he is to minister to the life of God in the souls of others.

Religion antedates religions and is the mother of them all. Religions vary according as curiosity, or fear, or hope, or conscience, or love predominates. Religion is the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man. It may influence primarily to seek for the truth about the Infinite: then it will manifest itself in creeds and theologies. It may in-

fluence primarily to fear the wrath of the Infinite: then it will issue in propitiations and atonements and sacrifices to escape this wrath. It may influence primarily to hope for reward from the Infinite: then it will express itself in services and sacrifices offered to the Infinite in hope of recompense hereafter. It may influence primarily the conscience through a belief that the Infinite is a righteous lawgiver: then it will issue in a constant warfare to compel the lower animal nature to obey the laws and regulations which are believed to be the expressions of his holy will. It may influence primarily through love of the Infinite as a Being of illimitable love: then it will issue in loyal, filial, reverential service of him and in gladness of fellowship with him. The first religion will be scholastic, the second sacrificial, the third and fourth legalistic if not servile, the fifth spontaneous and gladsome. Each of these phases of religion will have its excellences and its defects: the first will be definite, but dogmatic; the second penitential, but superstitious; the third and fourth will be virile, but hard and sometimes cruel; the fifth will be free and joyous, but vague in thought, possibly sentimental if not irreverent, and sometimes careless and lawless in life. In fact, in all religions these different elements are mingled though in different proportions. There are defects in all religions, because religion is a human experience; there are excellences in all religions, because in religion man is

seeking after excellence. Religions change with times, circumstances, and temperaments, but religion is universal. It would be easier to destroy the appetites in man, and feed him by shoveling in carbon as into a furnace; or ambition, and consign him to endless and nerveless content; or love, and banish him to the life of solitude in the wilderness, than to destroy in him those desires and aspirations and spiritual perceptions which make him kin to God, and inspire in him the higher experiences of awe, reverence, penitence, hope, and love.

But the Christian minister is more than a minister of religion; he is a minister of the Christian religion. If religion "consists in the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man," then the Christian religion consists in a perception of the Infinite so manifested in the life and character of Jesus Christ that the manifestation is able to promote in man Christlikeness of life and character. Then, also, if the minister of religion must have a living perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man, the Christian minister must so perceive the Infinite as manifested in the life and character of Jesus Christ, and must himself possess such measure of Christlikeness, that he can promote in other men a like perception and a like transformation of character.

Religion involves the relation between God and

man. All such relations involve obligations on both sides: by the inferior to the superior, but also by the superior to the inferior. The child owes duties to the parent, — the parent, also, duties to the child; the citizen, duties to the government, — the government, also, duties to the citizen; the pupil, duties to the teacher, — the teacher, also, duties to the pupil: no less is it true that man owes duties to God, and God also owes duties to man. There is a mutuality of obligation. God is under obligation to man as truly as man is under obligation to God. This mutuality of obligation between God and man is explicitly and reiteratedly affirmed both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is expressed by the word "covenant," for covenant involves mutuality of obligation. There is, on the one hand, the enforcement on man of his obligation toward God; there is, on the other hand, the recognition on God's part of his obligation toward man.

All religions recognize the obligations of man toward God; what is distinctive about the Christian religion is that it recognizes the obligations of God toward man. This is equally true of the Hebrew religion; but the Hebrew and the Christian religions are not separate religions, but one. Christianity is the Hebrew religion in flower; the Hebrew religion is Christianity in bud. When, therefore, I say that what is distinctive about the Christian religion is that it recognizes the obligations of God toward man, I include in that statement the Hebrew with the

Christian religion. This mutuality of obligation is the common characteristic of the one Hebrew-Christian religion.

The obligations of man toward God are expressed, generically, by the term law; specifically, by special laws; as, the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule, the summary of the Jewish law as given by Christ in the two great commandments, the precepts which Christ has given (as in the Sermon on the Mount), the moral maxims contained in the Book of Proverbs, or those contained in the twelfth chapter of Romans. These laws are the enunciation of obligations which man owes to God and to his fellow man, because his fellow man is also a child of God. And these obligations which man owes to God are stated, substantially, by the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as they are stated by other religions; more clearly, more simply, but in their fundamental elements identical. And this is because these laws of the Old and the New Testament are the embodiment of the law earlier written in the consciences of men. The law, as it is enunciated by the prophets and the apostles, is the interpretation to man of the law as it is written in his own conscience.

But while other religions recognize the obligations of man to God they do not recognize the obligations of God to man. In the precepts of Confucius, in the teachings of Siddhartha, in the code of Hammurabi, the ethical principles embodied

in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount may be found substantially stated; but there will not be found in these or in any other religious writings, prior to or apart from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, any recognition of the obligations of God to man, nor any clear and explicit statement of what God will do in fulfilling his covenant for man. Analogies with the Ten Commandments can be found, but nothing analogous to such promises as this in the prophecies of Isaiah:

> Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.[1]

Nor anything analogous to this declaration of Paul:

> But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.[2]

In these and kindred declarations of what God has done for men and will do for men the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament are unique; nothing comparable to them is to be found

[1] Isaiah lv, 6, 7. [2] Eph. ii, 4–6.

in the literature of other religions. In other words, the law, or man's duty to God, is defined in analogous terms in all religious literatures; the Gospel, or God's ministry to man, is peculiar to the Hebrew and Christian religions.

It is not only distinctive, it is emphatic.

Throughout their history the Hebrew people were taught by their religious teachers to look to the future for their Golden Age. This Golden Age they called "the theocracy," or "the kingdom of God." Their prophets told them that the time would come when the kingdom of God should be established on the earth and the will of God done here as it is done in heaven. This kingdom was portrayed in glowing colors. Education should be universal; law should have its support in religion; war should cease, and the warring nations should beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; the blind should see, and the lame should leap and walk; the very wild beasts of the forest should be transformed; the wolf should dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid, and the sucking child play on the hole of the asp, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas; and there should be new heavens and a new earth, and righteousness and praise should spring forth before all the nations. This kingdom of God was to be initiated by a Coming One, a Messenger of the Most High, a Servant who should be the Messiah,

a world Deliverer. Sometimes the Nation is indicated as this Servant of God; sometimes a single person seems to be foretold; sometimes he is portrayed as King, sometimes as Prophet, sometimes as Crowned Sufferer.[1] How these various prophecies are to be reconciled, or whether they can be reconciled, I do not stop here to discuss: I think myself they are simply different phases of the same great truth. However this may be, it is certain that from the opening chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Malachi, from the legend which speaks of a time when the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head to the closing verse of the Old Testament collection which foretells the great and dreadful day of the Lord, the Old Testament writers agree in turning the faces of the people toward the future, and filling their hearts with a glad anticipation of a final world deliverance from sin and sorrow, through Israel, and through some servant of God who should embody all that was best and truest in Israel's message to the world.

When Jesus Christ came, he began his message with the declaration that the time for the fulfillment of these prophecies had come.[2] Going into the synagogue at Nazareth, where he was brought up as

[1] Deut. xviii, 15–19; Psalm lxxii; Isaiah ii, 3, 4, ix, 6, 7, xi, 1–9, xxxiii, 6, xxxv, 6, xli, 8–13, xlii, 1–13, liii, 1–12, lxi, 1–11, lxv, 17; Micah iv, 2, 3; Hab. ii, 14; Zech. ix, 9, 10.

[2] Matt. iv, 17, x, 7; Mark i, 14.

a boy, he is asked to preach, and he opens the Book of Isaiah and finds the place where it is written:

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.[1]

He then declares to the congregation that he has himself come to fulfill this Scripture, and that its fulfillment is to carry blessing not merely to the people of Israel, but to the pagan world as well. This declaration with which he begins his ministry constitutes the theme of his life preaching. That theme is the kingdom of God and himself as its founder. Most of his instructions were conversational; but he is reported as preaching five great discourses, and this was the theme of the five. In the first, at Nazareth, he proclaims himself as the One who was to fulfill the ancient prophecy, and initiate the kingdom of God on the earth. In the second, the Sermon on the Mount, preached at the ordination of the Twelve to be his helpers, he explains the nature and expounds the principles of that kingdom. In the third discourse, or series of discourses, the Parables by the seashore, he traces prophetically the growth of that kingdom. In the fourth, on the Bread of Life, he reveals the secret of the power by which that king-

[1] Luke iv, 18, 19; Isaiah lxi, 1, 2.

dom of God is to be established in this world: the secret is acceptance of the Christ spirit, possession of the Christ life, loyalty to Christ. In the fifth, the discourse on the last days, he foretells the consummation of that kingdom, and the public recognition of himself as the judge and lord of the kingdom.[1]

Once he asks his disciples whom they think him to be. When Peter replies by affirming their faith that he is the promised Messiah, he approves the declaration, and affirms that on this faith in him as the world Deliverer, and on the power of that faith to transform men as it will transform Peter from a character as shifty as the waves of the sea to one as firm as a rock foundation, he will build his church. Again and again, in language which would be supremely egotistical were it not divinely true, he points to himself as the source of life in all its various phases. "I have come," he says, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And what he means by life he makes clear by repeated and explicit invitations. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." "My peace I give unto you." "These things have I

[1] Luke iv, 16–21; Matt. v, vi, vii, xiii; John vi, 26–59.

spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you."[1] Rest, power, contentment, peace, joy, — these are some of the elements in that life which he declares that he has come to give to mankind.

His life draws to a close. Betrayed by one disciple, denied by a second, deserted by the others, he is brought before the Jewish Supreme Court and accused of blasphemy in declaring himself to be the long-promised Messiah. In violation of the Jewish law he is put upon the witness-stand, the oath is administered to him, and he is asked directly the question whether he is the Messiah or no. In full consciousness of the fact that by his answer he seals his own death warrant, he replies, "I am."[2] He dies, and in his grave the hopes of his disciples are buried. They return to their fishing. Then it begins to be whispered about among them that the Jesus whom they followed has risen from the dead. With difficulty they are convinced of the fact, but when they are convinced their despair is turned into triumph. The fact that death had no dominion over him convinces them that he was indeed the One who was to bring deliverance to the world; and with this message they go forth to carry the hope of deliverance to the nations. If the reader will turn to the Book of Acts, and read the reports there given of the Apostolic sermons, he will find that

[1] Matt. xvi, 13–19; John x, 10; Matt. xi, 28; Mark i, 17; John vii, 37; John iv, 14; John xiv, 27; John xv, 11.

[2] Mark xiv, 62.

they are all different forms of the same message.[1] That message is not ethical, it is not a new philosophy of life, nor a new interpretation of the character of God, nor the elaboration of a new conception of man's relation to God. The Apostles are witness-bearers and what they bear witness to is this: The world Deliverer has come, and we know that he is the world Deliverer because he has triumphed over the last enemy, Death, over whom no one before ever won a victory. In that message Christianity was born, by that message Christianity has won its victory in the world. Says Browning:

> Does the precept run "Believe in good,
> In justice, truth, now understood
> For the first time?" — or, "Believe in me,
> Who lived and died, yet essentially
> Am Lord of Life?" Whoever can take
> The same to his heart and for mere love's sake
> Conceive of the love, — that man obtains
> A new truth; no conviction gains
> Of an old one only, made intense
> By a fresh appeal to his faded sense.[2]

The reports of Christ's life and teachings afforded by the Four Gospels answer Browning's question: Jesus Christ was the theme of his own ministry. The history of Christianity confirms Browning's affirmation: it is the history of a new moral power in the world derived from a new perception of the Infinite, and a new effect produced thereby on the moral character of man.

[1] For examples: Acts ii, 22–36; iii, 12–26; iv, 8–12; v, 29–32.

[2] Robert Browning: *Christmas Eve*, xvii.

It has often been said that Christianity is summed up in the two commands, — "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In fact, this is not Christianity at all; this is Christ's summary of Judaism, his summary of the law which defines man's obligation to God.[1] But this definition of man's obligation to God is not distinctively Christian, it is hardly even distinctively Jewish. Christianity is the statement of what God has done and is doing for man; and what it affirms God has done and is doing for man is this: God has come into life and filled one human life full of himself that he may fill all human lives full of himself, and in doing this he has brought the world deliverance from its sins, and transformed its sorrows into sources of a joy deeper than any sorrowless joy.

Let us return to Max Müller's definition: religion is "the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man." Then the Christian religion is such a perception of the Infinite as manifested in the life and character of Jesus Christ that the perception is able to produce in man Christlikeness of life and character.

I do not wonder that men disbelieve the Incarnation. I sometimes wonder whether any man believes it, whether I really believe it myself.

[1] Matt. xxii, 37–40.

What does it really mean? Nothing else than this: that the "Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed," [1] which creates, rules, pervades the universe, energizing it alike on the earth and on the remotest star; that the "Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness," [2] the power in all history, overruling all human wills, and out of stubborn and stupid souls working out a divine progress in events; that this Energy, this Power, has entered into one human life, filled it full, and lived and loved and suffered and died that we might know who and what he is, and how he who is intangible, inaudible, invisible, is operative upon us. I believe this because I believe, with Browning, that it is easier to think God has done this than that man has imagined it.

But, if we are ministers of the Christian religion, we perceive the Infinite not merely in the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth; we perceive the Infinite in his post-resurrection life and work. We believe and

[1] "Amid all the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty, that he is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed." — Herbert Spencer: *Religious Retrospect and Prospect,* "Ecclesiastical Institutions," p. 843.

[2] "How are we to verify that there rules an enduring Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness? We may answer at once: How? Why, as you verify that fire burns, — by experience! It is so; try it! You *can* try it; every case of *conduct*, of that which is more than three fourths of your own life and of the life of all mankind, will prove it to you." — Matthew Arnold: *Literature and Dogma,* p. 267.

bear witness not merely that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; we believe and bear witness that God is in this world of men here and now. The incarnation was not ended at Calvary. It is a perpetual fact. We believe that Christ is risen from the dead. This is not merely a curious fact in ancient history. What difference would it make to us whether Jesus rose from the dead or not if that were all? It is not practically important for us to know whether the man borne to his burial, and falling from his bier, rose from the dead when he fell on Elisha's bones. It is not practically important for us to know whether Lazarus really rose from the dead or not. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is important, because to us it means that this God who was manifest in the flesh, this image of God, this Immanuel — God with us — is still with us. He is not dead, he never died, he could not die. This Christ, who lived eighteen centuries ago in Nazareth and Capernaum, still lives; there is no death for him or for his followers; he came back to the world; he is in the world; he is as truly in America as he was in Galilee, as present in the Christian church as he was in the Jewish temple and the Jewish synagogue; and he is carrying on through all these centuries the same work of forgiving, healing, helping, inspiring love which he carried on during the three short years of his recorded earthly life. The Christian religion is the perception of the Infinite in the earthly life of

Jesus Christ; it is also the perception of the Infinite in the world history of Christianity. It is the perception of God in the world reconciling the world to himself, — forgiving its sins, assuaging its sorrows, and inspiring it with a new and divine life.

The Christian religion involves a new theology, that is, a new conception of God. The earliest conception of God is of one who is manifested in power. This is a true conception, but it is a partial, incomplete, imperfect, and so misleading conception. He is seen as the All-mighty One, but only as the All-mighty One. He is more. Says a Hebrew Psalmist: "Twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy." [1] When the first message only is heard, not also the second, when man sees the Infinite only in the manifestation of extraordinary power, and not also in the merciful instincts of his own heart, the natural result is a religion of fear. This religion Plutarch has graphically portrayed:

> Of all fears none so dazes and confounds as superstition. He fears not the sea that never goes to sea; nor a battle that follows not the camp; nor robbers that goes not abroad; nor malicious informers that is a poor man; nor emulation that leads a private life; nor earthquakes that dwells in Gaul; nor thunderbolts that dwells in Ethiopia: but he that dreads the divine powers dreads everything, — the land, the sea, the air, the sky, the dark, the light, a sound, a silence, a dream.[2]

[1] Psalm lxii, 11, 12.

[2] Plutarch's *Morals*, i, 169, Of Superstition.

To the pagan world dominated by this fear came the Jewish religion, which in its earlier forms was a conception of God as one manifested in the conscience of mankind. Its message to the world was that God is a righteous God who demands righteousness of his children and demands nothing else; that he will reward with peace and prosperity those who obey his just laws, but also that he will recompense with penalty, certain and terrible, those who do not obey. "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you," says the author of the Book of Deuteronomy, "that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." [1] This conception of God as a righteous Person, who "loves righteousness and expects man to conform to his peremptory rules of law," [2] was a true conception, but it was also partial, incomplete, imperfect, and so misleading. It was not a conception which brought peace, for there was always possible a fear that the soul had made a wrong choice, and the more conscientious the individual the greater was his apprehension. From both fears the later Hebrew religion by its message, and Christianity by its fulfillment of that message, brought deliver-

[1] Deut. xxx, 19.

[2] "The profound religious movement which took place in the Kingdom of Israel in the ninth century B. C. resolved itself into the assertion that Jehovah is a just God, who loves righteousness and expects man to conform to his peremptory rules of law." — Renan: *History of the People of Israel*, ii, 304.

ance. It perceived the Infinite not only as the Almighty, not only as a righteous God who demands righteousness of his children and demands nothing else; it perceived God as a redeeming God, who will help man to attain righteousness. The message of Mosaism was summed up in the Ten Commandments: Reverence God, honor your parents, regard the rights of your neighbor, and do this spontaneously from the heart, do not desire to do the reverse, and God will be your God, and you shall be to him a nation of priests. The message of the later Hebrew religion was summed up in the One Hundred and Third Psalm:

> Bless the Lord, O my soul,
> And forget not all his benefits:
> Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
> Who healeth all thy diseases;
> Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
> Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
> Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;
> So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.[1]

This message, illustrated, emphasized, manifested, fulfilled in the life of Christ and in the Christian experience of his disciples, constitutes the message of the Christian ministry to the world. It is the message that God is such an one as Jesus Christ; that the Infinite is to be seen manifested in a finite form in Jesus Christ; that he judges as Jesus Christ judges, condemns as Jesus Christ condemns, forgives as Jesus Christ forgives; that he is a Healer

[1] Psalm ciii, 2–5.

and Helper, a Saviour and Redeemer, a Friend of the friendless, a Companion of men; that he is ever doing in the world what Jesus Christ did in Galilee; that the Infinite is love, and that the life and service and sufferings of Jesus Christ are the interpreters of his love. To the pagan conception of God as power, to the Jewish conception of God as justice, — both of which were but partial and imperfect, — Christianity adds the revelation of God as mercy. Power is no longer feared when it is the power of a Father, pledged to be used for the succor of his child. And this is the message of Christianity to the fearful: "My Father, which hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." [1] Justice is no longer feared when, at the same moment and by the same act by which justice sets up a standard of character, it promises to enable the feeblest to achieve the standard. And this is the testimony of Christianity to the fearful: "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [2]

But the Christian religion is not merely a perception of the Infinite in the life and character of Jesus Christ, and in the post-resurrection history of his work in the world, it is also a change in the moral character of man produced by that perception. It is the transformation of character, individual and social, which that perception has wrought

[1] John x, 29. [2] 1 John i, 9.

in men. The perception of the Infinite as helping mankind out of their ignorance and poverty and misery and sinfulness has inspired in men to whom that perception was given a like spirit of helpfulness. The life of Christ as a revelation of what the Father is always doing in the world has inspired men to identify themselves with him in this service of love. For the standard of justice which Judaism had given in the Golden Rule, — "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," [1] Christ substituted a new standard in the commandment, "That ye love one another, as I have loved you." [2] Not equality of service, but self-sacrificing service, is the ideal, and in an increasing number of instances has become the passion of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Inspired by this spirit, Christianity became a great world movement for the emancipation and elevation of mankind. Christianity is the abolition of slavery, the overthrow of despotism, the recognition of the truth that all just governments are administered for the benefit of the governed, the organization of charity for the poor, the sick, the blind, the establishment of educational systems intended for and open to the masses, the diffusion of wealth

[1] Matt. vii, 12. Christ does not give this as his rule of life, but as his summary of the law and the prophets. The Golden Rule is simply a rule of justice. What right have I to demand that another should treat me better than I would treat him if our positions and relations were reversed ?

[2] John xv, 12.

and comfort, better homes, better food, better clothing, better sanitary conditions for all men. Because Christianity is a new perception of what Christlike work God is doing in the world, because it is an inspiration to man to take part in this work, it is a great world movement. It is Christ's sermon at Nazareth writ large in human history; it is the story of One who for eighteen centuries has been proclaiming glad tidings to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, delivering the captives, bestowing sight on the blind, setting at liberty those that are bruised. It is the One Hundred and Third Psalm writ large in human experience; the history of a world that has been sinning and sick and dying and humbling its head in dust and ashes, and of a God who has been forgiving its iniquities and healing its diseases and saving it from self-destruction and crowning it with loving-kindness and with tender mercies.

The Christian minister is a minister of this Christian redemption. It is true that in the life and character of Jesus Christ he holds up a new ideal and a new standard of life, and writes underneath it, "That ye love one another, as I have loved you." It is true that, in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, he holds up a new conception of God as the Father of whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, and writes underneath it, "Say, Our Father." But he does more than this. He is the herald of a great Deliverer, and he brings the

message of a world deliverance. His message is that the Messiah has come; that the world is a saved world; that sorrow is transformed, so that even in their tears Christians may cry, "We glory in tribulations also;"[1] that sin is vanquished, so that even while the battle is waged against it, Christians may shout as they fight, "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."[2] He is the messenger of glad tidings to the poor, of healing to the broken-hearted, of deliverance to the captives, of sight to the blind, of liberty to the bruised; he is the preacher of forgiveness to the sinful, of health to the diseased and the dying, of newness of life to those who have thrown their lives away, of loving-kindness and tender mercies to those for whom life seems to have no mercy, and humanity no love.

If he is to do this, he must perceive the Infinite as the Infinite is manifested in Jesus Christ, and he must be able to open the eyes of men so that they shall perceive the Infinite as the Infinite is manifested in Jesus Christ, and he must so perceive the Infinite in Jesus Christ, and so enable them to perceive the Infinite in Jesus Christ, that Christ-likeness of disposition and character shall be promoted alike in himself and in them. I do not say that a man may not at times have doubts respecting the Christian religion, and still be an effective Christian minister. A soldier may at times wonder, Is

[1] Rom. v, 3. [2] Rom. viii, 37.

war ever right? or a doctor, Is it worth while to administer drugs? But underlying the soldier's profession is the strong confidence that it is right to use force to put down force, and underlying the doctor's profession is the strong conviction that there are physical remedies for physical diseases. So, despite the doubts that may sometimes surge in upon him, underlying the work of the Christian minister must be his fundamental faith, so wrought into his consciousness that it is a part of his nature, not merely that there are noble moral ideals, not merely that there is a personal God, not merely that we owe to him reverential and loving obedience, but that God is in his world, ever doing what Jesus Christ is portrayed as doing in his earthly life, — pardoning iniquity, healing disease, redeeming life from destruction, and crowning man with loving-kindnesses and with tender mercies.

It is because this is the message of the Christian Church that the Church lays such stress upon its faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Jesus Christ means to the Christian believer that the Deliverer triumphed over death in the very moment when death seemed to triumph over him. It means that the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth is but the projection in visible form upon the screen of human history of a spiritual force more effective now than then just because it is invisible, an influence working in and through the spirits of men, and therefore limited by no con-

ditions of time or space. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not merely a miraculous evidence of his Messiahship, it is not merely the historical basis of Christianity as a world movement; it is also an historical witness to the spiritual vitality of a Divine Redeemer whom death could not imprison.

This message of the Christian religion makes it a missionary religion. The Christian missionary does not go to pagan nations to tell them that their religion is the product of priestcraft, or a delusion of the devil; nor to abolish one form of worship that he may substitute another; nor as the enemy of the spiritual faith, imperfect as it may be, of the people to whom he ministers. He goes in the spirit of Paul to Athens, — to say to the pagan world, "Whom without understanding ye worship, him we declare unto you;" he goes to make clearer and more intelligible the voice of their own conscience as it is interpreted in their own ethical precepts; he goes to emphasize their own sense of sin and their own need of pardon and help as these find expression in their religious rituals; and, above all, he goes to answer the question which their religious faith asks.

Professor William James, in his suggestive volume "The Varieties of Religious Experience," says, "Is there, under all the discrepancies of creeds, a common nucleus to which they bear their testimony unanimously?" and answers his question in the affirmative thus:

The warring Gods and formulas of the various religions do indeed cancel each other, but there is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. It consists of two parts:

1. An uneasiness; and
2. Its solution.

1. The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is *something wrong about us* as we naturally stand.

2. The solution is that *we are saved from the wrongness* by making proper connection with the higher powers.[1]

This is as far as paganism carries its votaries. The question which it leaves them asking, "How shall we make proper connection with the higher powers?" Christianity answers by replying, "The higher powers have already made that connection." We have not to remove the past sins which separate us from God, for he has already forgiven them; we are not to earn his favor by penances or services of any description, — his favor is the free gift of his love; we are not by self-absorption and interior meditation to think ourselves into some mystical acquaintance with him, — he has revealed himself to us by coming into human life and interpreting himself to us in the terms of a human experience; in short, we are not to climb up to God, — he has come down to us, and takes us into his strong arms as a father takes his child: all that we need to do is to accept the forgiveness that he freely offers,

[1] William James: *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 508.

and live joyously the life with which he inspires us.

This message of the Christian Church is the secret of the power which the Evangelical churches possess, and which no naturalistic philosophy or mere ethical teaching can ever rival. It is our faith in this message which makes us suspicious of all philosophies which seem to eliminate the supernatural from the world. It is because this is our message that we insist upon what are commonly called the great cardinal doctrines of the Evangelical faith, such as Inspiration, Incarnation, Atonement, and Regeneration. This is not because we are enamored of a particular system of theology; it is because our message to the world is like that of Jacob to himself when he woke from his dream: "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." I have been often asked to define the difference between the New Theology and Unitarianism. That difference is difficult to define, because both the New Theology and Unitarianism lay stress on life rather than on doctrine. But I may indicate the two trends of opinion, — one toward Divine immanence, the other toward naturalism, — without undertaking to identify the first with the new orthodoxy, or the second with Unitarianism, and I may do this by quoting the words of James Martineau, who, though he always disavowed the name Unitarian, was certainly no Trinitarian, and in his philosophy belonged to the liberal school of thought, though he was not always

ecclesiastically in sympathy with the Unitarian denomination. His testimony is the more significant because it was written toward the close of his life:

Your experience confirms my growing surprise, that the mission which had been consigned to us by our history is likely to pass to the Congregationalists in England and the Presbyterians in Scotland. Their escape from the old orthodox scheme is by a better path than ours. With us, insistence upon the simple Humanity of Christ has come to mean the *limitation of all Divineness* to the Father, leaving Man a mere item of creaturely existence under the laws of Natural Necessity. With them the transfer of emphasis from the Atonement to the Incarnation means the retention of a Divine essence in Christ, as the Head and Type of Humanity in its realized idea; so that Man and Life are lifted into kinship with God, instead of *what had been God* being reduced to the scale of mere Nature. The union of the two natures in Christ resolves itself into their union in man, and links Heaven and Earth in relations of common spirituality. It is easy to see how the Divineness of existence, instead of being driven off into the heights beyond life, is thus brought down into the deeps within it, and diffuses there a multitude of sanctities that would else have been secularized. Hence, the feeling of reverence, the habits of piety, the aspirations of faith, the hopes of immortality, the devoutness of duty, which have so much lost their hold on our people, remain *real powers* among the liberalized orthodox, and enable them to carry their appeal home to the hearts of men in a way the secret of which has escaped from us. I hardly think we shall recover it now. There is plenty of scope, however, for any young prophet who can bring into his mis-

sion the faith and fervour of more spiritual churches, in combination with the rationality and veracity of ours.[1]

Whenever a minister forgets this splendid message of pardon, peace, and power based on faith in Jesus Christ as God manifest in the flesh, whenever for this message he substitutes literary lectures, critical essays, sociological disquisitions, theological controversies, or even ethical interpretations of the universal conscience, whenever, in other words, he ceases to be a Christian preacher and becomes a lyceum or seminary lecturer, he divests himself of that which in all ages of the world has been the power of the Christian ministry, and will be its power so long as men have sins to be forgiven, temptations to conquer, and sorrows to be assuaged.

[1] James Drummond: *The Life and Letters of James Martineau*, ii, 231.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FUNCTION OF THE MINISTRY

Is there any longer need for a Church and a ministry? That men and women are putting this question to themselves, and answering it either with a doubtful affirmative or with a positive negative, cannot be questioned by any student of modern thought.

There are a few who agree, more or less definitely, with Strauss[1] that "instead of a prerogative of human nature it [religion] appears as a weakness which adhered to mankind during the period of childhood, but which it must outgrow on attaining maturity." They rank religion with superstition, believe it to be the product of priestcraft, — something which has been imposed upon the credulity of mankind, — a weakness, not a strength; a feebleness, if not a folly, which belongs to the primitive condition of mankind, and is to be discarded as mankind reaches its higher development. Such men look with contempt upon the institutions of religion, because they look with contempt upon religion itself.

Others believe that reverence and awe are neces-

[1] David Friedrich Strauss: *The Old Faith and the New*, i, 158.

sary experiences of the human soul, but that they are aroused by mystery, and dispelled by knowledge. In their view all that concerns the Infinite and the Eternal is involved in impenetrable mystery. God is the Unknown and the Unknowable. Religion cannot be defined in doctrine, nor taught in text-books and sermons, nor embodied in institutions. Such men discard religious teaching and religious institutions, because they hold that the invisible lies beyond the realm of apprehension. They think, if they do not say, with Huxley, "truly on this topic silence is golden; while speech reaches not even the dignity of sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, and is but the weary clatter of an endless logomachy." [1]

To those who have clearly defined their views, even to themselves, as thus anti-religious or unreligious, must be added a larger number of men and women whose education has taught them that the intellectual forms in which religion has expressed itself in the past are not consistent with truths clearly revealed to us by modern investigation. They can no longer believe in the infallibility of the Bible, or in the historicity of miracles as miracles are understood by them, or in the fall of man and the entrance of imperfection and sin into the world as a consequence of that fall, or even in the personality of God, which they identify with the anthropomorphic conceptions of Deity formed by

[1] T. H. Huxley: *Hume*, p. 183.

them in their childhood; and as these intellectual forms of religion are still in their minds identified with the Church and its teachings, they either attend the Church and listen to those teachings with impatience or indifference, or discard both the Church and the ministry altogether.

More than either, probably more than all these classes combined, are those who discard the institutions of religion, not because they discard religion, but because they think that religion is so pervasive, so universal, so fundamental an instinct of humanity that institutions of religion are no longer needed. Religion is a spirit, and all the experiences of life are engaged in promoting and developing it. Time was, such men say to themselves, when religious institutions were indispensable, and they are still indispensable to certain classes in the community. They are, therefore, to be respected, encouraged, perhaps supported; but the world is outgrowing them; other instrumentalities have come in to develop the religious spirit and to make ecclesiastical organizations unnecessary. The apostle Peter catalogues the elements which go to make up a divinely organized character: "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love." [1] Various instrumentalities in society, say such non-churchgoers, are de-

[1] 2 Pet. i, 5-7.

veloping these virtues in man as well or better than rituals and sermons. Athletics produce virtue, or manliness. The requirements of business promote temperance, because drinking men are no longer wanted in positions of trust. Daily life, by the burdens which it lays upon us, develops patience as no preacher can develop it. Social intercourse evokes in us brotherly kindness. The home, the wife, the children inspire in us love. There remain in the apostle's catalogue faith and godliness. Concerning these two qualities such skeptics are silent. Perhaps in confidential conversation they will admit that the old religion produced certain qualities of piety and reverence which modern scientific thought, business activity, and social affiliations do nothing to produce, but if so, they will regard the loss with mild regret, as they regard the lost arts of a bygone civilization; possibly they may say with Frederic Harrison and the Humanists, more probably they will think without saying, that the new reverence for Humanity must take the place of the old reverence for God. Says the author of "Letters from a Chinese Official:"

> Humanity they [the Chinese] are taught as a being spiritual and eternal manifesting itself in time in a series of generations. This being is the mediator between heaven and earth, between the ultimate ideal and the existing fact. By labor incessant and devout to raise earth to heaven, to realize in fact the good that exists as yet only in idea — that is the end and purpose of human

life, and in fulfilling it we achieve and maintain our unity, each with every other and all with the Divine. Here surely is a faith not unworthy to be called a religion.[1]

If faith is looking upon the things that are unseen, this is not faith. If religion is a perception of the Infinite, this is not religion. Looking at one's self in the mirror and worshiping one's own image is not reverence. Spelling humanity with a capital H does not make it divine. But this reverence for an idealized humanity is offered by a few and accepted by many as a substitute for that religion which is the life of God in the soul of man.

Other men in the community, and these probably a still greater number, regard religion as important, and even the Church and the institutions of religion as valuable, but not for themselves. "I always thought," says Moses Pennel, "that my wife must be one of the sort of women who pray."[2] Moses Pennel is a type. Many men desire the inspirations and restraints of religion for others, but do not desire those inspirations, still less those restraints, for themselves. They are glad to have their children in the Sunday-school and their wives in the church, but they do not go themselves; they say in moments of confidence, When we go to church we get nothing from it, we do not hear as good music as at the opera, and the minister tells

[1] *Letters from a Chinese Official*, p. 52.

[2] Harriet Beecher Stowe: *Pearl of Orr's Island*, p. 321.

us nothing we did not know before; we prefer to remain at home and read.

To these classes must be added still another, and a not inconsiderable one, of those who discard the Church because it seems to them to discard religion. Liberal leaders have told them that Christianity is a life, not a doctrine, that the inspiration of this life is to be found in Jesus Christ, and the ideal of this life in his teachings and his character, and they declare that they do not find this ideal presented or this inspiration afforded by the Christian Church. This class is thus described by the editor of "The Hibbert Journal:"

> The type of plain man we are considering wants a more valid proof than has yet been offered that the world is *serious* when it professes the Christianity *which is a life and not a creed.* He doubts, moreover, whether he could seriously and honestly make such a profession himself. He is by all operative standards an honorable man; he deals honestly in trade, is a good husband and father, faithful to his friends (though perhaps a little hard on his foes), public-spirited, patriotic, munificent. But to pretend that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are his, even in their spirit, would be a flagrant falsehood. He admires the beauty, he may even admit the philosophic truth of the principle which bids him lose his life to save it; but he is an acting member of a community whose industrial life is based on the opposite principle of competition! He knows the danger of riches; remembers the saying about laying up treasure on earth; but willingly and eagerly takes

his part in an economic system which rests on the accumulation of wealth. He is a firm supporter of the criminal law; holds that great armaments are necessary to the life of nations; takes pride in the majesty and power of the British fleet; upholds the Government when it shakes the mailed fist in the face of foreign nations, — and he will not sully his conscience by pretending that he who does these things is a believer, in any sense whatever, in non-resistance to evil, in unlimited forgiveness, or in the principle of turning the other cheek. If these commandments are involved in the Christianity which is a life, if obedience to them is required of the followers of Christ, then he is no Christian, and will not pretend to be.[1]

Perhaps if, when he went to church, he heard the Christian ideal simply and clearly defined, and the violations of that ideal current in human society candidly and courageously condemned, he might continue to go, though he fell under that condemnation himself; but he declines to go to a church which substitutes a lower ideal, condones where it should condemn, or offers acceptance of a creed, long or short, simple or complex, or participation in a ritual, liturgical or non-liturgical, for a simple and real acceptance of the precepts and principles of Jesus Christ, and an honest endeavor to apply them to the current problems of modern life.

The view of these classes, more or less clearly defined, more or less consciously entertained, that

[1] *The Hibbert Journal*, January, 1904, pp. 254, 255.

the institutions of religion are no longer necessary for the promotion of the higher life, or that the institutions of religion as they exist in this country to-day no longer do promote the higher life, seems to receive some confirmation from the fact that certain functions which the Church once performed it no longer needs to perform, because other institutions have come in to take its place and to do its work in these departments.

I. The Church was originally the administrator of charity. When the Church was born there were no organized charities in the world. There are expressions of charity in the ancient moralists, no doubt, but charity, organically, wisely, systematically administered, did not exist in pagan Rome, and was not developed by pagan literature. Says Mr. Lecky:

> However fully they [the Stoics] might reconcile in theory their principles with the widest and most active benevolence, they could not wholly counteract the practical evil of a system which declared war against the whole emotional side of our being, and reduced human virtue to a kind of majestic egotism. . . . The framework or theory of benevolence might be there, but the animating spirit was absent. Men who taught that the husband or father should look with perfect indifference on the death of his wife or his child, and that the philosopher, though he may shed tears of pretended sympathy in order to console his suffering friend, must suffer no real emotion to penetrate his heart, could never found a true or lasting religion of benevolence. Men who refused

to recognize pain and sickness as evils were scarcely likely to be very eager to relieve them in others.[1]

When, therefore, the Christian churches came into existence, they had not only to inspire the spirit of benevolence, but they had also to organize the activities of benevolence. There were no organizations into which they could put the expression of the new life. There were no charitable organizations; and the Church was not in touch with the great political organizations and could not affect them. If the work of benevolence was to be done at all, it had to be done by the Church; and the Church, therefore, became an organized charitable society. This work of charity done by the Church became one of its most prominent pieces of work. Says Edwin Hatch:

The teaching of the earliest Christian homily which has come down to us [Clement on Romans xvi] elevates almsgiving to the chief place in Christian practice: "Fasting is better than prayer, almsgiving is better than fasting: blessed is the man who is found perfect therein, for almsgiving lightens the weight of sin." It was in this point that the Christian communities were unlike the other associations which surrounded them. Other associations were charitable: but whereas in them charity was an accident, in Christian associations it was of the essence. They gave to the religious revival which almost always accompanies a period of social strain the special direction of philanthropy. They brought into the Euro-

[1] W. E. H. Lecky: *History of European Morals*, i, pp. 201, 202.

pean world that regard for the poor which had been for centuries the burden of Jewish hymns.[1]

Out of these conditions grew the organization of the early churches. They were almoners of charity no less than preachers of religion. The spirit of charity which they created they also organized; the gifts which they inspired they also distributed. That spirit of humanity which leads the rich to provide for the poor, and the competent to care for the incompetent, — the deaf and blind and sick and weak-minded, — existed only very feebly, and only in exceptional individuals, outside of the Christian Church; and as this spirit of humanity was distinctively and almost exclusively a church as well as a Christian virtue, its organic exercise was naturally intrusted to church officers. Out of this charitable work grew, as Dr. Hatch tells us, the bishopric.

But in our time the conditions have entirely changed, — changed because the Church has done its fundamental work so thoroughly. The spirit of humanity is still a Christian virtue; but it is no longer a distinctively church virtue. The Church has so permeated Christendom with the spirit of humanity that it no longer needs administer through its own organism the spirit of charity which it has inspired. The city, the state, the nation, have become charitable organizations. The system of penol-

[1] Edwin Hatch: *Organization of the Early Christian Churches*, pp. 35, 36. Comp. A. P. Stanley: *Christian Institutions*, pp. 210, 211.

ogy has become a system of reform. Hospitals and poorhouses and orphan asylums are founded, some by the political organism, others by private enterprise. And it is a little difficult for the philosopher to see why church charities should exist to any great extent. Why should we have a Presbyterian hospital and an Episcopal hospital? Is there a Presbyterian method of setting a broken bone, or an Episcopalian method of curing typhoid fever? Nor can it be said that church hospitals are doing any better or any different work than the hospitals which are inspired by the Christian Church, but not directed by it.

It is not, then, the function of the Christian minister, primarily, to be an almoner of public charity, or to be an administrator of philanthropic work. Whether it is best that a church should be what men call an institutional church or not, will depend altogether upon circumstances. If it is situated in a community where that kind of work is already adequately and sufficiently done, or in a community where it can inspire men to do it by other than distinctively church organizations, that is the better way. It is better to inspire the Young Men's Christian Association to carry on a gymnasium than for the Church to carry on a gymnasium. It is better to inspire the city to maintain a hospital than for the Church to maintain a hospital.

Nevertheless, there remains a very fundamental charitable work for the Church to do. Much insist-

ence is put in our time upon organized charity, — and not too much; but it is quite possible to put all the emphasis on the organization and none on the charity. The primary function of the Church is to inspire in men the spirit of love, not to organize, direct, or administer that love when it has been inspired. There are other organizations — national, state, voluntary — to carry out the requirements of that spirit whenever and wherever it exists. But what institution, other than the Church, makes it a direct, specific, and definite object to create, foster, and develop the spirit of charity? The cry, More money for hospitals and less for churches, is like the cry, More water for the reservoir and less for the springs. For the greater proportion of the money for all benevolent and educational institutions supported by private contributions comes either directly from the churches, or indirectly from them through men whose education has been received in the churches and whose ideals have been obtained there. The Church is to be measured, not by the institutions it sustains, but by the inspiration it imparts.

Even where the conditions of the community are such as to require an institutional church, the more institutional it is, the more necessary that it should be made inspirational. These subsidiary institutions, — the boys' club, the girls' club, the gymnasium, the kindergarten, — as carried on by a church, are but the instruments by which the

Church is to serve men in the higher life. The clergyman who allows himself to forget his great work, which is the promotion of the life of God in the soul of man, in order that he may establish a philanthropic institution or a gymnasium or a kindergarten or a sewing-school, allows himself to be diverted from the higher and nobler service to one that is less important. It is a great mistake if the modern minister substitutes the charitable administration of a philanthropic machine for the inspirational work of the pulpit, kindling in men the flame of human love and of godly reverence. To do this is to do exactly the reverse of that which the Apostles counseled; they said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables."[1] The word of God is the revealing of God to men; serving tables is philanthropic ministry to the lesser, though more apparent, needs of men.

II. A second function which the Church exercised in the olden time, and which it no longer has occasion to exercise, was that of government. When the Roman Empire fell into ruins, and the Imperial autocracy was dissolved, little or nothing remained of government for a time but the municipal system. The members of the municipal governing bodies became discouraged and apathetic, and the priests and bishops, full of the new life, naturally and rightfully offered themselves to do the work of superintendence and administration for the muni-

[1] Acts vi, 2.

cipalities. They became the principal municipal magistrates, because they were the men of force and honor. "We should be wrong," says Guizot, "to reproach them for this, to tax them with usurpation. It was all in the natural course of things; the clergy alone were morally strong and animated; they became everywhere powerful. Such is the law of the universe." [1]

As the result of this coöperation with the civil authorities in the administration of the municipalities, political power gradually passed over to the bishops, and then finally to the Bishop of Rome, and there ensued the next stage of political development, in which the clergy coöperated with the civilians in the administration of the State. They divided the functions, the clergy taking the ecclesiastical side of life, the civilians the civil side of life. Under this system the Church and the State became one, as they had been one in the Hebrew Commonwealth. The identification of the two in one organism is thus described by Professor James Bryce:

> Thus the Holy Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire are one and the same thing, in two aspects; and Catholicism, the principle of the universal Christian society, is also Romanism; that is, rests upon Rome as the origin and type of its universality; manifesting itself in a mystic dualism which corresponds to the two natures of its Founder. As divine and eternal, its head is the

[1] Guizot: *History of Civilization in Europe*, i, 36.

Pope, to whom souls have been entrusted; as human and temporal, the Emperor, commissioned to rule men's bodies and acts.

But this, which Mr. Bryce well calls "the one perfect and self-consistent scheme of the union of Church and State," proved to be impracticable; in fact, was attained only at a few points in the history of the Holy Roman Empire.

It was finally supplanted by another view of their relation, which, professing to be a development of a principle recognized as fundamental, the superior importance of the religious life, found increasing favor in the eyes of fervent churchmen. Declaring the Pope sole representative on earth of the Deity, it concluded that from him, and not directly from God, must the Empire be held, — held feudally, it was said by many, — and it thereby thrust down the temporal power, to be the slave instead of the sister of the spiritual. Nevertheless, the Papacy in her meridian, and under the guidance of her greatest minds, of Hildebrand, of Alexander, of Innocent, not seeking to abolish or absorb the civil government, required only its obedience, and exalted its dignity against all save herself.[1]

Thus there were three stages in the development of the political power of the Church: in the first, the clergy went into politics because there was no one else to administer public affairs; in the second, the clergy divided political functions with the laymen, they taking one part, the laymen the other; in the third and last, the clergy assumed the respon-

[1] James Bryce: *The Holy Roman Empire*, pp. 106–109.

sibility of telling the laymen what they ought to do, and enforced their counsels by spiritual authority.

By common consent, in America, the first two of these methods of clerical participation in politics are abandoned. It is universally agreed that it is not the function of clergymen, as clergymen, to manage legislatures or municipal assemblies. If Dr. Washington Gladden goes into the Common Council of Columbus, he is not there in his capacity of clergyman. There is nothing in American politics which corresponds to the participation of the Bishops of the Church of England in the English government, through their seats in the House of Lords.

But there are those who think that the Christian ministry ought to tell the people how to perform their political duties. When those duties were performed by the Emperor, it was the Pope's duty to tell the Emperor how to perform them; now that they are performed by all the people, ought not modern ministers to tell the people how to perform them? In other words, ought not the minister to preach politics? This question cannot be answered categorically. It cannot be answered unqualifiedly in the negative, for all duties are proper themes for the minister, and free citizenship imposes certain duties on the citizen. It cannot be answered unqualifiedly in the affirmative, for in politics questions of ethics, questions of policy, and questions concerning party leaders and party organizations are

so interwoven that it is often impossible to preach on the current political questions without becoming the advocate of one side of a question of political expediency, if not the apologist or eulogist of a party candidate or a party organization.

There are two things necessary to good government in a free commonwealth: the first is a diffused spirit of patriotism, justice, and good-will; the second is the organization of this spirit of patriotism, justice, and good-will in laws and political institutions. It is the function of the lawyer, the statesman, the political reformer, to formulate the spirit of patriotism, justice, and good-will in laws and institutions; it is the function of the minister to develop the spirit of patriotism, justice, and good-will that it may be in the community to be formulated. It is the function of the minister to inculcate by every means in his power the fundamental principle that the Indian in this country is to be treated with justice, that he is not to be robbed and kept in ignorance and denied liberty; but the questions, How shall we frame our laws for this purpose? Shall the Indian be under the War Department or under the Interior Department? Shall the reservation be broken up, and in what way? do not belong to him, as minister, to solve.

In the nature of the case, the statesman must be an opportunist if he is to succeed; that is, he must consider the immediate effect of the present action. But we need other men in the community than op-

portunists. We need men with a long look ahead; men who are not considering what will be the immediate effect; men who consider what will be the ultimate effect of human action on the kingdom of God. Such is the minister. He is or should be an idealist. When an idealist goes into politics and undertakes to carry out his ideals in political action, he fails; when an opportunist goes into the pulpit and undertakes to measure human policies by immediate results, he fails. So long as Savonarola proclaimed the great fundamental principles of truth and righteousness and justice, he was a great power in Italy; when he undertook to become a political leader and frame the policies for the State, he lost his power.

The function of the minister is not to tell men how they ought to vote in the immediate issue before the community. His function is to inspire in his congregation the faith that God is in his world working out his kingdom, and the purpose to work with him to that end. It is to lift men above the issues of the hour to the eternal issues; above the party conflicts of the hour to the eternal conflict between truth and error, light and darkness, humanity and injustice, selfishness and generosity, good and evil, in which all temporary conflicts are but episodes. It is to cause them to consider the effect of their action, not upon their own personal interests, nor upon those of their party, but upon the kingdom of God. If the minister, strong in

that perception of God which constitutes the essence of religion, perceives him in public affairs, and causes his congregation to look there for him also, he may contribute nothing directly to the solution of tariff, or currency, or colonial questions, on which the nation is to vote; but he will do what is far more important, — he will promote that spirit of divine justice which clarifies the mind from the disturbing influences of pride and passion, and that long look ahead which is the best guide for the action of each day. If, on the contrary, the minister fails to do this, no one else will or can fulfill this function; it will remain unfulfilled.

If, then, I could reach my brethren in the ministry with my pen, my message to them would be this: Deal with all the public issues of your time, but deal with them exclusively in their relation to the kingdom of God. As a citizen, you may be a Republican or a Democrat, a Populist or a Prohibitionist, but in your pulpit be neither. Do not undertake to use your ministerial influence to promote the success of special candidates or parties or political policies. It is not certain that you are infallible; it is very certain that your congregation will not believe that you are. You and I are men of like passions as other men. In the midst of a heated political campaign we ourselves get the heats of the campaign burning like a fever in our veins. During the Bryan campaign the ministers who preached on the political issue in the East assured us that the

gold standard was the only honest money, and the ministers who preached in Colorado were equally certain that free silver was the only honest money. Remember, too, that there are men who are shrewder than you are, who will be very glad to get your influence to promote the result of the election of to-day, but who care nothing for the relation of that vote or of your influence to the kingdom of God in the world. Do not work for parties, nor for candidates, nor for immediate results; do not be an opportunist. Carry your idealism into all your teaching concerning political questions. Work for the triumph of the kingdom of God, not for the triumph of a political party. Do not imagine that the triumph of the kingdom of God is identical with or even dependent upon the triumph of a political party. Remember that there are honest men in all parties and dishonest men in all, and seek not to promote victory for the party of your choice, but to promote whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, in men of all parties and in men of none.

III. A third function which the Church formerly exercised, and which is now better exercised by other instrumentalities, is that of secular education.

In the first century the only schools for the common people were those connected with the Jewish synagogues. Neither Rome nor Greece made any provision for the education of the common

people. Christianity inherited from Judaism, with its free spirit and its free political institutions, its educational system. The Church established, with charities for the poor, schools for the ignorant, and for a long time these parish schools furnished the only provision of any kind for the education of the children of the poor. Out of these parish schools grew institutions of higher learning, mainly devoted, however, to preparation of an elect few for the clerical profession. Protestants ought always to hold in grateful remembrance the monasteries, not only because in their libraries they preserved the manuscripts which have brought down to our time the best thoughts of the ancients, whether pagan or Christian, secular or religious, but also because they handed over to the Christian community from the Hebrew community the provision which the latter had made for popular education. But, on the other hand, Roman Catholics ought not to forget that this educational work of the Church was carried on, not because the Church believed this to be her prime function, but because it was absolutely necessary work, and there was no other organization willing or able to undertake it. It is not the primary function of the Church to furnish secular instruction. Says the Rev. Thomas Bouquillon, Professor of Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.:

> The Church has received from her Divine Founder the mission to teach the supernatural truths. . . . But

the Church has not received the mission to make known the human sciences, she has not been established for the progress of nations in the arts and sciences, no more than to render them powerful and wealthy. . . . Her duty of teaching human sciences is only indirect — a work of charity or of necessity: of charity when they are not sufficiently taught by others who have that duty; of necessity when they are badly taught, that is, taught in a sense opposed to supernatural truth and morality. This is why the missionary, setting foot in a savage land, though he begins with the preaching of the Gospel, very soon establishes schools. . . . There are men who seem to assert that the Church has received the mission to teach human as well as divine science. They give to the words of Christ, *Euntes docete* (go and teach), an indefinite interpretation. But such an interpretation is evidently false.[1]

I do not affirm that this is the authoritative position of the Roman Catholic Church on this subject. Probably many Roman Catholic authorities would dissent from it. Certainly the doctrine that furnishing education is the primary function of the State is still hotly denied by ecclesiastics, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, in Europe. The religious war now raging in France is the result of an endeavor by the State to take the work of teaching out of the hands of the Church into its own hands. The recent Educational Bill in England is the re-

[1] Thomas Bouquillon: *Education: To Whom Does it Belong?* See also two other pamphlets by the same author and with same title: (1) *A Rejoinder to the Civiltà Cattolica;* (2) *A Rejoinder to Critics.*

sult of an endeavor by the Church to recover the supervision and control of the educational work of that country, partially taken out of its control and lodged in that of the state authorities by a previous administration.

But for America we may consider this question decided. The great body of the people, Protestant and Roman Catholic, agree in their support of the public school; and this means that they agree in their belief that education for the common people is to be furnished by the State, not by the Church; that in its control and administration it is to be civil, not ecclesiastical. There will probably always be private schools and church schools in America, but they will be the exception. The education of American boys and girls in the industries, the arts, and the sciences will be mainly furnished, not in parochial but in public schools, not under the control of the clergy, but under the control of the State. It is true that there are still flourishing denominational colleges. But in most Protestant communions these are denominational in name rather than in reality, in the control to which they are intrusted, rather than in any doctrine which they teach or even any influence which they exert.

But although in America the Church has relegated to the State the work of educating the youth in the arts and sciences, it does not follow that the Church has no longer any educational function. Says Professor Huxley:

Education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature, — under which name I include not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. For me, education means neither more nor less than this. Anything which professes to call itself education must be tried by this standard, and if it fails to stand the test, I will not call it education, whatever may be the force of authority, or of numbers, upon the other side.[1]

The State is, in the main, admirably giving instruction of the intellect in the laws of Nature; but she is doing little or nothing directly to fashion the affections and the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws. And that this fashioning of the affections and the will is quite as essential as the instruction of the intellect we are beginning in America to discover. Man is not governed by his reason; he is guided by his reason, but he is governed by his emotive powers, by his affections and his will, by his appetites, his passions, his love of acquisition, his love of approbation, his self-esteem, or by his reverence, his conscience, his hope, his love. A man whose intellect is well instructed, but whose affections are ill trained, is more poorly educated than one whose affections are well trained and whose intellect is ill instructed; as an ocean steamer is a more helpless object if it is without an engine

[1] T. H. Huxley: *Science and Education*, p. 83.

than if it is without a rudder. We have yet to learn how in this country to organize and carry on a system of education which will fulfill the definition of Professor Huxley: which will fashion the affections and the will, as well as instruct the intellect.

This is not to be done by dividing education into two departments, and intrusting the instruction of the intellect to the State and the fashioning of the affections to the Church; nor is it to be done by establishing a state church in order to give in the state schools instruction in the doctrines of the Church. A Roman Catholic bishop of this country has in a pregnant paragraph intimated the way in which it must be done. Says the Right Rev. John J. Keane, D. D.:

> A school is not made a Christian school by taking up a good deal of time in doctrinal instruction or in devotional exercises, which would otherwise be spent in acquiring secular knowledge. Some time, indeed, must be given to these, and it ought to be, and can be, made the most instructive and beneficial part of the school hours; but that time need not be, and should not be, so long as to be wearisome to the pupils or damaging to other studies. What, above all, make it a Christian school are the moral atmosphere, the general tone, the surrounding objects, the character of the teachers, the constant endeavor, the loving tact, the gentle skill, by which the light and the spirit of Christianity — its lessons for the head, for the heart, for the whole character — are made to pervade and animate the whole school-life of the

child; just as the good parent desires that they should animate his whole future life in all his manifold duties and relations as man and as citizen. This is the kind of a school which a parent, anxious as in duty bound to give his child as thorough Christian training as possible, will naturally choose.[1]

As it is not the primary function of the Church to administer charities, but it is its primary function to inspire in the community the spirit of charity; as it is not the primary function of the Church to govern, nor to tell either emperors, aristocracies, or democracies how to govern, but it is its primary function to inspire in the rulers of the land the spirit of justice out of which all righteous policies proceed; so it is not the primary function of the Church to administer systems of education; but it is the primary function of the Church to inspire in the community such a desire to fashion the affections and the will in conformity to the laws of life, that the public school shall fulfill the end of education as defined by Professor Huxley; that is, shall fashion the affections and the will, as well as instruct the intellect, and shall be a Christian school as defined by Bishop Keane; that is, Christian in its moral atmosphere, in its general tone, and in the character of its teachers. Nor can it be doubted that it is a greater work to inspire the community with the spirit of charity than to administer particular charities; to inspire all parties with the spirit

[1] The Rt. Rev. John J. Keane: *Denominational Schools*, p. 9.

of justice than to counsel particular policies, or contribute to the victory of any party; to inspire the school system with Christlikeness of disposition than to teach the pupils in a parochial school the tenets and ritual of a denomination. This work the Church can do only by being true to its specific work, — that of ministering to the Christian life of the community.

Let us recur to our definition of the Christian religion: The Christian religion consists in such a perception of the Infinite, as manifested in the life and character of Jesus Christ, that the perception is able to promote in man Christlikeness of character. Then a Christian church is a body of men and women who possess in some degree such a perception of the Infinite in Jesus Christ and some Christlikeness of character, and who have united for the purpose of imparting to others that perception, and developing in others that character. Catholics — whether Roman, Greek, or Anglican — believe that the Church was organized by Jesus Christ himself, and that loyalty to him requires his disciples to unite with that historic organization; Protestants believe that any men and women possessing this vision of God, and animated by this purpose to impart it and its fruits to others, have a right to constitute themselves a church of Christ for that purpose. But both Catholics and Protestants agree that a church, if it be a church of Christ, must be animated by the spirit of faith, hope, and

charity; faith, that is, the perception of the Infinite in Christ; hope, that is, the aspiration for Christ-likeness which that perception inspires; love, that is, a desire to impart both the perception and the resultant life to the world.

The message of the Christian Church is very simple and very profound. It is not a series of disjointed messages, though many counsels of perfection grow out of it. It cannot be adequately formulated in a creed, though it involves a new and inspiring conception of life. It cannot be stated in words, because life always transcends definition; and yet a few simple words may suffice to suggest it. It is that God is not the Unknown and the Unknowable; that though he transcends all our definitions, yet he is a self-revealing God; that he manifests himself in nature, in the world's history, in human experience, and preëminently in the person and character of Jesus Christ; that through Jesus Christ the manifestations of God in nature, in history, and in human experience are interpreted, and, so to speak, vocalized; that in knowing God, in acquaintance with him, in participation in his life, is the secret of life, the fruits of which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, self-control; that love, not any ordered selfishness, is the true social bond; that loyalty to God's law, not any divine right of kings or of democracies, is the foundation of just government; that character building, not

any mere intellectual instruction, is the only adequate education; and, finally, that the secret of all social well-being is the individual life, the secret of all individual life is acquaintance with God, and the supreme source of acquaintance with God is Jesus Christ.

In giving this message the Church of Christ is more than an instrument of social reform. It is a minister to life. And in its ministry to life it responds to the two deepest and most universal desires of mankind; the desire for peace and the desire for power.

Every healthful man sometimes looks back regretfully upon his past. He is conscious of blunders in judgment, of aberrations of will, of deliberate acts of wrong-doing which have brought injury upon himself and upon others. He wishes that he could live again his life, or some particular crisis in his life. His experience answers more or less consciously to the expression in the General Confession in the Book of Common Prayer: "We have done the things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone the things which we ought to have done," even if his self-dissatisfaction does not lead him to add, "and there is no health in us."[1] Sometimes this is a keen sense of shame for some specific deed done or duty neglected; sometimes it is a vague feeling of self-condemnation, without clearly defined

[1] The Book of Common Prayer: The Order for Daily Morning and for Daily Evening Prayer.

specific cause; sometimes it is a passing shadow, evanescent and uninfluential; sometimes it is a morbid self-condemnation, depressing the spirits and tending toward despair. But he who has never felt this sense of remorse in some one of its various forms is singularly lacking, either in his memory, his ideals, or his power of sitting in judgment upon his own conduct and character. It is doubtful whether any desire which the human soul ever possessed is keener or more overmastering than the desire which sometimes possesses it, in certain phases of experience, to be rid of its ineradicable past, and to be permitted to begin life anew, unclogged and unburdened.

The other spiritual hunger of the soul relates to the future. The soul is conscious of undeveloped possibilities in itself; it is spurred on to it knows not what future by unsatisfied aspirations. It longs to do and to be more, and rather to be than to do. It has in the sphere of moral experience aspirations which may be compared to those which have summoned the greatest musicians and the greatest artists to their careers. This sense of unsatisfied aspiration differs from the sense of remorse in that it relates to the future, not to the past; the one is a consciousness of wrong committed or duty left undone, the other of life incomplete. The cry of the soul in the one experience is that of Paul: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"[1] The cry of the other is that of Tennyson:

[1] Rom. vii, 24.

> And ah for a man to arise in me,
> That the man I am may cease to be![1]

The one is a craving for peace, the other for achievement. The one belongs to a nature which dwells in the past, the other to a nature which lives in the future. Not only are different temperaments differently affected, the one being more conscious of regret, the other of unsatisfied aspiration; but the same person sometimes experiences the one, sometimes the other. One age of the world is more prone to the former, another age to the latter. In our time there is comparatively little experience of regret for the past. There is, to use the phrase current in theological circles, very little "conviction of sin." The age has its face set toward the future. Its ideals lie before it, not behind. It is eager, expectant, hopeful, aspiring. It takes no time to look back, not even time enough to learn the lessons which the past can teach. But it is full of eager expectations for a nobler civilization, a better distribution of wealth, more harmonious relations between employer and employed, juster government, better social and industrial conditions, a nearer approximation to brotherhood. In the Middle Ages, humanity was burdened by the consciousness of past wrong-doing, and it sought relief from its burden by seclusion from the world in monastic retreats. In the present age, humanity is feverish with unsatisfied aspirations, and is driven by its fever into

[1] Tennyson: *Maud*, X, vi.

the world, there to engage in ceaseless and excessive activities. Like a mettlesome steed cruelly roweled with spurs, yet held in by a curb bit, is the present age, spurred on by aspiration to even greater achievements, yet held back by prudential self-interest from the great endeavor and the greater self-sacrifices without which the noblest achievements are always impossible.

It is because the Christian religion professes to be able to satisfy these two passionate desires of the human soul — the desire for peace and the desire for achievement — that it possesses the attraction which the failures and the folly of its adherents may diminish, but cannot destroy.

Christianity is more than a system of ethics — though it has revolutionized ethics; more than a method of worship — though it has furnished a new inspiration to worship and given it a new character; more than a philosophy of life — though it has given to life a new interpretation. It is a new life founded on a historic fact; take that fact away and it is difficult to see how the life could survive. The belief of the universal Christian Church in that fact is expressed with incomparable simplicity in the words of one of the more ancient Christian creeds: "I believe . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven." [1] What is the relation of this Lord Jesus Christ to the Eternal Father from whom

[1] The Nicene Creed.

he came, and how he accomplishes our salvation, are questions to which Christian philosophers give different answers. But all Christian believers accept the historic fact that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, and that he came down from heaven for us men and our salvation. In its possession of this faith and its interest in this fact lies the secret of the power of the Christian Church. Rob it of this faith, take from it this fact, and its peculiar power would be gone ; it would only be a teacher of ethics, or a school of philosophy, or a conductor of religious mysteries in an unintelligible worship of an unknown God. For in its possession of this fact lies its power to take from men the two burdens which so sorely oppress them, — that of remorse for a wrongful past, that of unsatisfied aspiration in the present and for the future.

Empowered by this fact, the Church declares to men burdened that their sins are forgiven them. This is not a philosophical statement founded on a general faith that God is good and therefore will forgive sins ; still less is it the enunciation of a general belief that he is merciful and therefore will not be very exacting of his children, but will let them off from deserved punishment if they appeal to him with adequate signs of repentance, in penances or otherwise. It is the statement of the historic fact that God forgave men their sins before they repented ; that he bears no ill-will and no wrath against them ; that he only desires for them

that they shall be good men and true; and that, to accomplish this, his good-will toward them, Jesus Christ has come forth from his Father and our Father into the world. Empowered by this fact, the Church acts as the official and authoritative promulgator of a divine forgiveness, an authoritative and historically reinforced interpreter of the divine disposition; empowered by this fact, the Christian teacher repeats of himself what Jesus Christ said of himself: "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."[1] He reiterates Christ's message and with the same authority: "Go in peace and sin no more."[2] He re-declares, not as a theory, but as an historically established fact: "Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . hath given power, and commandment, to his ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel."[3]

While the Church thus with authority unloosens the burden of the past from those on whom a remorseful memory has bound that past, it also inspires with a hope for the future which turns the anxious and sometimes despairing aspirations into eager and gladly expectant ones. For it tells the story of a Man who in himself fulfilled the spiritual desires

[1] Mark ii, 10. [2] Luke vii, 48–50; John viii, 11.

[3] The Book of Common Prayer: The Order for Daily Morning and for Daily Evening Prayer.

which are in all noble men, and then, departing, left as his legacy the command, which is also a promise: "Follow me." It answers the question, What is human nature? by pointing to the character of Jesus of Nazareth, with the assurance, What he was every man can become. It answers the question, Is life worth living? by pointing to that life and declaring that, as he laid down his life for us, so can we lay down our lives for one another. It presents to humanity not an ideal merely, but a realized ideal, and in this realization of the highest ideal of character gives assurance that our aspirations are not doomed to disappointment, unless we ourselves so doom them. That they are intended by our Father to be realized, and that we can realize them, is historically attested by the life of him who was the Son of man, and who, experiencing our battles, has pointed out to us the possibility of victory and the way to achieve it.

This is the secret of the power of the Church: not the excellence of its ethical instruction, not the wisdom of its religious philosophy, not the æsthetic beauty of its buildings or its services, and certainly not the oratory of its preachers: but this, that it is charged with a double message to men burdened by a sense of wrong-doing in the past and tormented by unfulfilled aspirations for the future; a message to the first, Thy sins are forgiven thee;[1] a message to the second, You can do all things

[1] Luke v, 20.

through him that strengtheneth you.[1] Poorly as the Church understands its mission, poorly as it delivers its message, it nevertheless has this as its mission, this as its message. And when it fulfills the one and delivers the other with the power that comes from the conscious possession of divine authority, men gather to its services to receive its gift. This is not the only message of Christianity: it teaches a purer ethics, it proffers a more sacred consolation, it incites to a more joyous and inspiring worship than any other religion; but no other religion has attempted to proclaim with authority pardon for the past, or to give, as from God himself, power for the future.

Of the principles which I am here trying to interpret, two illustrations are afforded in the very recent life of the Church, — illustrations which are all the more significant because they come from quarters so dissimilar theologically and ecclesiastically that to many persons they seem to have nothing in common. The first illustration is afforded by the High Church movement in England; the second by the life and work of Dwight L. Moody.

It can hardly be necessary to say that I have no ecclesiastical or theological sympathy with the High Church movement. I do not believe that Jesus Christ organized a church, or appointed bishops, or gave directly or by remote implication any special authority to the bishops thereafter to

[1] Phil. iv, 13.

be appointed in the Church, or conferred special grace, or intended that special grace should be conferred, by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, or made either of them means of conveying supernatural grace, except in so far as they became the expressions of a mood or spirit of mind receptive of grace. I do not believe in the perpetuity of a priesthood, or an altar, or the kind of sacrificial system which a priesthood and an altar seem to typify. And yet it is impossible for any student of current events to doubt that the High Church party in the Anglican Church is really exerting a notable spiritual influence in England; that it is attracting in many cases large congregations to before sparsely attended churches; that it is felt as a power in many hearts and homes. To think that this is because Protestant England is going back to its old-time allegiance to the Pope of Rome, or because a generation which has departed in its social standards from the severer simplicity of Puritan England wants elaborate ritualism in its churches, or because it is easier to conduct an orderly ritual than to preach a tolerable sermon, and easier to go through the first without attention than to give attention to the second, is to misread the signs of the times, and, in judging a movement, to estimate it by the mere incidents which happen to accompany it and not by the essential spirit which characterizes it. The distinctive characteristic of the High Church party

is its sacerdotal spirit;[1] its exaltation of the priesthood and the altar; its conversion of the memorial supper into a bloodless sacrifice of the mass; and its use of priesthood, altar, and mass to emphasize the right of the priest to declare *authoritatively* the absolution and remission of sins. It is because the High Church priesthood assume power on earth to forgive sins, and so to relieve men and women of the first of the two burdens of which I have spoken, that it has its power over the hearts of its adherents. It is for this reason, also, that its power is mainly seen among women. Women's morbid consciences make them susceptible to painful and sometimes needless regrets, and a church which offers to remove this burden of the past appeals to them more than it does to men, who are more inclined to let the dead bury their dead, and ask for a religion which will help them to a better future. High Church theology has no special efficacy in equipping the soul for the future, and it has, therefore, no special attraction for virile men. But so long as men and women feel the burden of the irreparable past, so long they will come to that church, and only to that church, which declares with authority that the past is forgiven; and they will not always be critical in inquiring whether all

[1] It has also been characterized by notable missionary and philanthropic activity. But this is not *distinctive* of the High Church party; it belongs to the age, and is seen in every denomination within the Church and in some organizations wholly unecclesiastical.

the grounds on which that authority is claimed can stand historical investigation.

At the other extreme, ecclesiastically, are the evangelists of our time, chief among them all, and type of them all, the late Dwight L. Moody. If I speak of him peculiarly, it is because he affords so striking an illustration of the principle which I wish to elucidate. Mr. Moody belonged to a denomination which discards all notion of the priesthood, whose ministry are only laymen performing a special function in a church without orders. In this church he never had such ordination as is generally required of those who desire to exercise ministerial functions. His services were accompanied neither by Baptism nor by the Lord's Supper. He believed that the latter was a memorial service, not a bloodless sacrifice; that any Christian, whether lay or clerical, was equally a priest; to him the Church was a meeting-house and the altar a communion table or table of meeting; and most of his services were held in unconsecrated halls. But never did a High Church priest of the Anglican Church believe more profoundly that to him had been given authority to promise the absolution and remission of sins, than did Mr. Moody believe that he possessed such authority. Rarely, if ever, did priest, Anglican or Catholic, hear more vital confessions or pronounce absolution with greater assurance. The High Churchman thinks that he derives such power through a long ecclesiastical line; Mr. Moody

believed that he derived it through the declarations of the Bible; but both in the last analysis obtained it by their faith in "one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven." The one no less than the other spoke, or claimed to speak, by authority; both derived their authority from the same great historic fact; and the attractive power which drew unnumbered thousands to the preaching of Mr. Moody was in its essence the same as that which draws unnumbered thousands to the Altar and the Eucharist.

This is the function of the Christian ministry: not to administer charity, but to inspire in the community the spirit of charity; not to counsel wise political policies, but to inspire in government the spirit of justice; not to instruct the intellect, but to fashion the affections and the will; and this it is to do by imparting to men peace from the burden of the past and power for the duties of the present and the future. If the Christian ministry is to do this work it must be itself inspired by such a perception of the Infinite in the life, character, and post-resurrection work of Jesus Christ as is able to promote in men Christlikeness of character. If this perception is wanting in the ministry, the ministry will be without power. If we of the so-called liberal faith hope to retain in these more liberal days the attractive power of the Church, we can do it only by holding fast to the great historic facts of

the birth, life, passion, and death of Jesus Christ essentially as they are narrated in the Four Gospels, and to the great spiritual fact that in the God whom Christ has revealed to us there is abundant forgiveness for all the past, and abundant life for all the future. And this we must declare, not as a theological opinion, to be defended by philosophical arguments as a rational hypothesis, but as an assured fact, historically certified by the life and death of Jesus Christ, and confirmed out of the mouth of many witnesses by the experience of Christ's disciples and followers in all churches and in every age. If we fail to do this, men will desert our ministry for Romanism, Anglicanism, and Evangelism, or, in despair of spiritual life in any quarter, will desert all that ministers to the higher life, and live a wholly material life, alternating between restless, unsatisfied desire and stolid self-content. And the fault and the folly will be ours more even than theirs.

If the Church is to give this message of peace and power it must give it with authority. Whence does it derive this authority? and how is this authority attested?

## CHAPTER III

### THE AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTRY

THE writers of the Bible speak with authority. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, it was not to say to the Children of Israel on the plain, I advise you not to steal, not to kill, not to commit adultery; you will be a great deal happier if you do not do these things; the experience of the world indicates that this is disadvantageous. He says, Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery. He speaks with authority. When Isaiah speaks to the Children of Israel, in a later age, he does not say, I think you are mistaken in putting such stress on forms and ceremonies; it is far more important to keep the heart clean than it is to offer sacrifices; the experience of the world indicates this; and there are other good reasons for thinking so. He says, in the name of God, and speaking as for him: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? . . . Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well."[1] These prophets spoke in the name of God. Their customary phrase was, "Thus saith the Lord."

[1] Isaiah i. 11, 16, 17.

They spoke with authority. When Christ comes and a great audience gathers to hear that ordination sermon which we call the Sermon on the Mount, he does not argue, he simply affirms; and when he has finished, the people say, This man speaks with authority, and not as the Scribes. He promises to his apostles similar authority. He says, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." When Paul writes his Epistles, it is still with power. The Gospel, he says, is "the power of God unto salvation." [1] From the Exodus to the close of the canon the Bible speaks with authority.

Where did these men get their authority? What was the secret of it? What was its nature?

They certainly did not get it from the Bible, because the Bible is composed of what they said; it is the product of their utterances. The Bible gets its authority from the prophets and the apostles; the prophets and the apostles do not get their authority from the Bible.

They did not get it from the Church. Moses spoke before any church was organized. The later prophets stood in no relation to the Church; they did not belong to the hierarchy. The priests were in a succession, but the prophets were not. In the later times, Christ and the apostles did not get their authority from the Church. Christ did not;

[1] Matt. vii, 29; Acts i, 4, 5, 8 (cf. Luke xxiv, 49); Rom. i, 16 (cf. 1 Cor. i, 18).

the Church excommunicated him; the major part of his life the Church was fighting him. Paul did not; the Christian Church was divided on the question whether he was an apostle or not, and the Jewish Church turned him out of the synagogue.

The sacred writers did not get their authority from reason. Their affirmations were not deductions; their revealings were not conclusions of arguments. The Hebrews were not philosophers. They did not argue. Jesus Christ rarely argued. His most emphatic declarations were not syllogistic in form and cannot be put in syllogistic form. His great sermons — the Sermon at Nazareth, the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Bread of Life — are not logical. Paul argued; but only for the purpose of making the people accept the conclusions which he had reached by a different process. Sometimes his arguments are formal, not real; sometimes the processes are illogical; sometimes the premises would be doubted or denied by most modern readers; generally his most authoritative declarations are not preceded by any arguments, as: "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;" or "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."[1] Where does he get his authority for such a statement? How did he know? How can he know?

These writers did not get their authority from

[1] Rom. viii, 22, 28.

miracles. Granting that all the so-called miracles in the Bible were performed exactly as narrated, still it remains true that the great majority of the Bible teachers performed no miracles. Most of the prophets performed none. Of those Biblical teachers who did perform miracles, the great majority made their utterances independent of any miracles.

They did not get their authority from the fulfillment of prophecy, for the prophecy was not fulfilled for years, in some cases not for centuries, after the prediction. Events occurring from two to four centuries after the death of the prophet could not have given the prophet his authority during his lifetime. Their authority did not come from prophecy, nor from miracles, nor from argument, nor from the Church, nor from the Bible; and yet they spoke with authority.

The character of this authority has been described by Canon Liddon in an eloquent passage:

> Wherein did this power which the Apostles were to receive consist? Creating political ascendancy, yet utterly distinct from it; fertilizing intellectual power, yet differing in its essence from the activity of mere vigorous unsanctified intellect; working miracles, (it may be) gifted to work physical wonders, yet certainly in itself more persuasive than the miracle it was empowered to produce; intimately allied with, and the natural accompaniment of distinct ministerial faculties, yet not necessarily so, — what is this higher, this highest power, this gift of gifts, this transforming influence, which was to countersign as if from heaven what had previously been given by the

Incarnate Lord on earth, and was to form out of unlettered and irresolute peasants the evangelists of the world? My brethren, it was spiritual, it was personal, it was moral power. And spiritual power may be felt rather than described or analyzed. It resides in or it permeates a man's whole circle of activities; it cannot be localized, it cannot be identified exclusively with one of them. It is felt in solemn statements of doctrine, and also in the informal utterances of casual intercourse; it is felt in actions no less than in language, in trivial acts no less than in heroic resignation; it is traced perchance in the very expression of the countenance, yet the countenance is too coarse an organ to do it justice; it just asserts its presence, but its presence is too volatile, too immaterial, to admit of being seized, and measured, and brought by art or by language fairly within the compass of our comprehension. It is an unearthly beauty, whose native home is in a higher world, yet which tarries among men from age to age, since the time when the Son of God left us His example and gave us His Spirit. It is nothing else than His spiritual presence, mantling upon His servants; they live in Him; they lose in Him something of their proper personality; yet they are absorbed into, they are transfigured by, a Life altogether higher than their own: His voice blends with theirs, His Eye seems to lighten theirs with its sweetness and its penetration; His hand gives gentleness and decision to their acts; His Heart communicates a ray of its Divine charity to their life of narrow and more stagnant affection; His Soul commingles with theirs, and their life of thought, and feeling, and resolve is irradiated and braced by His.[1]

[1] H. P. Liddon: *Clerical Life and Work*, pp. 159–161.

Eloquent as this description is, it yet leaves something to be desired. Can we by analysis approximate an understanding of the secret of this power? Can we state it in psychological terms? Two writers have done this: one an ancient, the other a modern author; one theological, the other anti-theological; the one called himself an Apostle, the other called himself an Agnostic.

The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians thus describes this authority:

> And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power.

His power was a demonstration of the spirit. What does that mean? A little later in this Epistle he tells us what it means:

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.[1] Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not

[1] That is, as in the next sentence, "the spirit which is of God."

the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.[1]

Every man has a body, a physical organism. He has a social and intellectual character that is somewhat akin to that of the animal. And he also possesses a spiritual nature, — a faith, a hope, a love, — that transcends the animal nature, the social nature, the physical nature. This spiritual nature in man searches the deep things of God. It is all the time groping; it is all the time looking for something the eye does not see and even the imagination has not conceived. It feels, it realizes, it knows, because it is spirit; knows something that transcends the senses, something that argument cannot bring, something that logic cannot demonstrate. Every man has this spirit in him. If we so speak that we evoke that spiritual response in the men who listen to us, our words are with authority, because they themselves see also that it is true. We are ourselves revelators. We draw aside the veil that hangs over men's souls, and then they see and know: not because the Church has told them, not because the Bible has told them, not because miracles have attested it, not because fulfilled prophecy has proved it, not because reason has reached it, but because they see it.

Such is Paul's explanation of the secret of his

[1] 1 Cor. ii, 4, 9–15.

power. His preaching was powerful because it was in "demonstration of the spirit;" not "proof by syllogistic deduction of a conclusion from known premises,"[1] but proof by the revelation to the spirit in man which is able to perceive spiritual truth upon the bare presentation of it.

In very different language, but to the same effect, is Professor Huxley's explanation of the source of our knowledge of ethical truth, and so the secret of power in the ethical teacher:

Some there are who cannot feel the difference between the "Sonata Appassionata" and "Cherry Ripe" or between a grave-stone-cutter's art and the Apollo Belvedere; but the canons of art are none the less acknowledged. While some there may be, who, devoid of sympathy, are incapable of a sense of duty; but neither does their existence affect the foundations of morality. Such pathological deviations from true manhood are merely the halt, the lame, and the blind of the world of consciousness; and the anatomist of the mind leaves them aside, as the anatomist of the body would ignore abnormal specimens. And as there are Pascals and Mozarts, Newtons and Raffaeles, in whom the innate faculty for science or art seems to need but a touch to spring into full vigor, and through whom the human race obtains new possibilities of knowledge and new conceptions of beauty: so there have been men of moral genius, to whom we owe ideals of duty and visions of moral perfection, which ordinary mankind could never have attained: though, happily for them, they can feel the beauty of a

[1] Aristotle: quoted in Liddell & Scott's Greek-English Lexicon under ἀπόδειξις.

vision which lay beyond the reach of their dull imaginations, and count life well spent in shaping some faint image of it in the actual world.[1]

An analysis of the closing sentence of this paragraph shows two statements in it, each of which throws some light on the authority of the Biblical writers. The first statement is that the men of moral genius have possessed not merely ideals of duty, but also *visions* of perfection; that is, they have not merely imagined an ideal which we might seek to realize, but they have seen an existing standard of perfection to which we may endeavor to conform our character. The second statement is that to these ideals of duty and visions of perfection ordinary mankind could never have attained, except through the disclosure of them by the men of moral genius; in other words, we need not wait for an original ideal or vision, but may well accept both at second hand from another, and count that life well spent which shapes some image of it in the actual world.

This is the authority which underlies all effective ethical teaching. Goodness is a kind of beauty; and the prophet is one who sees this beauty himself and is able to make others see it. This is the authority which underlies the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. When Moses says to Israel, Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, their own con-

[1] T. H. Huxley: *Hume*, pp. 239, 240.

sciences respond, This is right. When Jesus Christ says, Do not indulge in lustful thoughts, love your enemies, do good to them that despitefully use you, he speaks with authority, because there is in men the capacity to see the truth and beauty of these utterances. There is no need of argument. The congregation say to themselves, That is true. The authority lies in the preacher, because it lies in the heart of the hearer. It lies in the preacher, because he is able to evoke in the heart of the hearer the same voice that has spoken within his own heart.

But the soul of man has need of something more than ethical principles to guide his conduct. Man needs God, as the body needs water. Man can see and know God as one with whom he can have spiritual communion, as he can know the spirit of a friend. The preacher speaks of God with authority when he realizes this need of man, and when he is able so to present God that his presentation satisfies that need. That there is such a need, sometimes underlying consciousness, sometimes acutely felt in consciousness, sometimes openly expressed in sorrowful words, is abundantly testified to by literature. One of the most ancient expressions of the soul's need for God is found in that splendid "epic of the inner life," the Book of Job:

> Oh that I knew where I might find him,
> That I might come even to his seat!
> I would order my cause before him,
> And fill my mouth with arguments.

I would know the words which he would answer me,
And understand what he would say unto me.
Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
Nay; but he would give heed unto me.
There the upright might reason with him;
So should I be delivered for ever from my judge.
Behold, I go forward, but he is not there;
And backward, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him:
He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.[1]

Not less pathetic is the testimony of a modern agnostic, Professor W. K. Clifford, to the same truth:

It cannot be doubted that theistic belief is a comfort and a solace to those who hold it, and that the loss of it is a very painful loss. It cannot be doubted, at least, by many of us in this generation, who either profess it now, or received it in our childhood and have parted from it since with such surging trouble as only cradle-faiths can cause. We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven, to light up a soulless earth; we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead. Our children, it may be hoped, will know that sorrow only by the reflex light of a wondering compassion.[2]

Professor Clifford is mistaken. As long as man is man and God is God, so long will man not be content to see "the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven, to light up a soulless earth;" so long he will cry out, sometimes in articulate outcries, sometimes in inarticulate and half-conscious moanings, like a child in his sleep reaching for his mother,

[1] Job xxiii, 3–9.
[2] W. K. Clifford: *Lectures and Essays*, p. 389.

Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! This is the reason men allow one day in the week the wheels of the factory to stop, the store to be closed, the plough to stand unused in the furrow, even the courts to halt in the administration of justice, that those who are busy for six days accumulating material wealth, or serving their fellow men on the earthly and material side, may take one day for seeking a knowledge of him to whom they are always coming, and yet who must ever remain in some sense the Unknown. Surely it is significant that Herbert Spencer, who is preëminently known as the apostle of agnosticism, — the doctrine that the Infinite and the Eternal is and ever must be the Unknown, — surely it is significant that his last word to the world, in the closing paragraphs of his autobiography, is a testimony born of his own experience that the longing to know the Unknown is irrepressible:

Behind these mysteries lies the all-embracing mystery — whence this universal transformation which has gone on unceasingly throughout a past eternity and will go on unceasingly throughout a future eternity? And along with this arises the paralyzing thought — what if, of all that is thus incomprehensible to us, there exists no comprehension anywhere? No wonder that men take refuge in authoritative dogma! . . . Thus religious creeds, which in one way or other occupy the sphere that rational interpretation seeks to occupy and fails, and fails the more the more it seeks, I have come to regard with a sympathy based on community of need: feeling that dissent

from them results from inability to accept the solutions offered, joined with the wish that solutions could be found.[1]

No philosophical solution ever did, ever will, or ever can satisfy this need. The need is not intellectual, but spiritual. It is not need of a solution, it is need of a God. It is not the desire of a philosopher to solve an enigma, it is the desire of a child to find his Father. If the preacher can bring to his congregation nothing better than a solution of the enigma, nothing better, that is, than a theology, the people will go away unsatisfied. If he has in himself some experience of God, however superficial, fragmentary, and imperfect, and if he has the power to evoke in his congregation an experience of God, though it be as superficial, as fragmentary, and as imperfect as his own, they will come again. It is neither the "authoritative dogma" nor the "rational interpretation" which the souls of men hunger for; it is the Living Person; and it is for the minister to answer this need by evoking in the soul a consciousness of the Living Person.

Helen Keller, deaf, dumb, blind, shut out from the world of sense, from the world of beauty, and to a large extent from the world of men, seeks to know God, and writes to Phillips Brooks, "I wish you would tell me something about God;" and thus he answers her:

[1] Herbert Spencer: *An Autobiography*, ii, 548, 549.

Let me tell you how it seems to me that we come to know about our heavenly Father. It is from the power of love in our own hearts. Love is at the source of everything. Whatever has not the power of loving must have a very dreary life indeed. . . . And so God who is the greatest and happiest of all beings is the most loving too. All the love that is in our hearts comes from him, as all the light which is in the flower comes from the sun. And the more we love, the more near we are to God and his love.[1]

He proves nothing, cites no authority of Church or Scripture; simply bids her look into her own heart, and in its testimony find the revelation for which she longs.

Charles Dickens was not a theologian; he was not pietistic; he was a dramatist; he saw clearly, and described effectively, the common experiences of common men. He dealt chiefly with plain, unlettered, uncultivated people. In "Bleak House" he portrays Allan Woodcourt standing by the form of poor Jo, a heathen who had been living in the heart of London, — and there is no pagan land more pagan than some parts of our great cities, — as the breath is departing from the body of the poor boy, who has never known anything of religion or of God or of Christ. Allan says:

"Jo, my poor fellow!"

"I hear you, sir, in the dark; but I 'm a-gropin', a-gropin', — let me catch hold of your hand."

"Jo, can you say what I say?"

[1] Helen Keller: *The Story of My Life*, p. 187.

"I 'll say any think as you say, sir; for I knows it 's good."

"OUR FATHER."

"Our father! — yes, that 's wery good, sir."

"WHICH ART IN HEAVEN."

"Art in heaven. Is the light a-comin', sir?"

"It is close at hand. HALLOWED BE THY NAME."

"Hallowed be — thy" —

The light is come upon the dark benighted way. Dead![1]

That is preaching. If the minister can say "Our Father" so that the men and women in his congregation will also say "Our Father, yes! that is very good," this is enough. He will not need to go to bishops or archbishops for authority; he will not need to quote texts for authority; the authority is in the hearts that are before him. If the minister cannot evoke this response from the hearts of his congregation, no authority of gowns and crosses, of ordinations and laying on of hands, of books and writers, ancient or modern, inspired or uninspired, will suffice to make him a preacher. The authority of the preacher lies in his power to make other men see the God whom he has himself first seen.

And if he is able to make them see the God whom he has himself first seen, a God whose forgiving love and inspiring power are manifested in Jesus Christ and in the history of Christianity, he will, in imparting to them this vision, impart also that forgiveness for the past and that inspiration for the

[1] Charles Dickens: *Bleak House*, chap. xlvii.

future, that peace and that power, which are the deepest needs of the human soul, and are at times its most intense desire. If he can first awaken that dormant desire and make it dominant, and then if he can satisfy it, by leading the soul to him who alone can satisfy it, no other evidence of his authority need be offered, for no other will be demanded. If he cannot do this, ecclesiastical indorsements will be cited by him in vain; for none such will be sufficient.

Is there, then, no authority in the Church, and none in the Bible? Are there no standards of truth and duty? Is that for each man the truth which he thinks to be true, and that for each man right which he thinks to be righteousness? Are truth and duty subjective terms merely, — truth only the opinion of the individual, duty only the impulse of the individual? No; this would be an intolerable conclusion: truth and duty are realities; opinions and impulses are only the method by which those realities are interpreted to us. There is an authority apart from the judgment and conscience of the individual man, — a real authority; and it is to be found both in the Church and in the Bible. And it is of the utmost importance that the modern religious teacher should understand the nature and source of this authority. The authority both of the organization and of the Book lies in the fact that both appeal to the spiritual nature of man, give expression to the half-conscious spiritual life of

man, and by their message respond to the imperfectly realized spiritual wants of man. When the authority of either the Church or the Bible is regarded as though it were something apart from the authority of God, speaking to and in the spirit of man, when the attempt is made by the authority of either the Church or the Bible to repress the questioning of the human spirit, to impair its life, and to impose obligations upon it against which its conscience and its judgment rebel, there can be but one result, — a weakening of all religious authority, if not an open rebellion against it. Certain it is that the religious teacher must understand clearly the two antagonistic conceptions respecting the authority of the Church, and the two antagonistic conceptions of the authority of the Bible, and must choose between them.

The Roman Catholic theologians define with great clearness, and accept with entire consistency, what may be called the ecclesiastical conception of Church authority. This conception is thus defined in the "Faith of Catholics:"

> The way or means by which to arrive at the knowledge of divine truths is attention and submission to the voice of the Pastors of the Church: a Church established by Christ for the instruction of all; spread for that end through all nations; visibly continued in the succession of Pastors and people through all ages. Whence the marks of this Church are, Unity, Visibility, Indefectibility, Succession from the Apostles, Universality, and Sanctity.[1]

[1] *The Faith of Catholics*, Prop. VI, i, 9.

All churches which regard a visible, historical organization as the basis and source of authority in religion, whether Greek, Roman, or Anglican, belong in the same category. For convenience' sake, this theory may be termed the Catholic theory. It is accepted by all loyal communicants in the Greek and Roman Catholic communions, and by a considerable number of the clergy in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The other conception of the authority of the Church regards the Church as the whole body of those in all ages in whom has been developed the power of so perceiving the Infinite as that their moral nature is changed by the perception; who are inspired by the spirit of faith, hope, and love; who possess in their own souls that life of God in the soul of man which constitutes the essence of religion. The Church thus defined is the Republic of God; it is the temple in which he dwells; it is the body of Christ, the historic continuation of the Incarnation. Its unity is not in creed, or ritual, or sacrament, or orders and organization, but in spiritual life. The authority of the Church as interpreted by this conception is the authority derived from the testimony of the concurring experience of unnumbered thousands. It is the authority of the individual consciousness, multiplied by innumerable witnesses. It furnishes a standard of faith, exactly as the testimony of many witnesses furnishes a standard of observation. If a thousand

men have seen the same phenomenon, and a hundred who were in the same place at the same time did not observe it, we accept the affirmative testimony of the thousand and disregard the negative testimony of the hundred. We accept the testimony of the Church of God, bearing witness to its experience of Divine life in the souls of men, and do not count the testimony of those who have no such experience. Such negative experience is of no weight whatever in counteracting this affirmative testimony to a real life. And we use without hesitation that which is concurrent in the consciousness of many witnesses to correct that which is idiosyncratic in the experience of a single individual. This conception of the basis of authority is disavowed by practically all Greek and Roman Catholic theologians; unfortunately, it has been but dimly held and inconsistently inculcated by most Protestant theologians. But as the one theory may be entitled Catholic, so the other may be entitled Protestant. It is impossible to combine the two. "In vain," says Auguste Sabatier, "will eminent men in both camps, with the most generous and conciliatory intentions, arise and endeavor to find some middle ground, and effect a pacific reunion of the two halves of Christendom. All compromises, all diplomatic negotiations, will fail, because each of the two principles can only subsist by the negation of the other."[1] He truly adds, that in actual

[1] Auguste Sabatier: *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 211.

life "this opposition is attenuated by the fact that in all Catholicism there is a latent Protestantism, and in all Protestantism a latent Catholicism." But the Roman Catholic Church is quite right in refusing to tolerate in its hierarchy this latent Protestantism; and Protestantism will never become the spiritual power it ought to be until it frees its clergy from this latent Catholicism. In vain does an unhistorical hierarchy endeavor to attach authority to the creeds of the Church while it disavows the Roman Catholic definition of the Church. Those Protestants who endeavor to invest the creeds of the past with authority really revert, however unintentionally and unconsciously, to the Catholic affirmation that the "means by which to arrive at the knowledge of the divine truths is attention and submission to the voice of the Pastors of the Church." They affirm what Zwingli denies, "that the meaning of the celestial Word depends upon the judgment of men;" and they deny what Zwingli affirms, that "faith does not depend upon the discussions of men, but has its seat, and rests itself invincibly in the soul. It is an *experience* which every one may have." [1]

But though the authority of the Protestant minister is not derived from the Church, it is enforced and strengthened by the Church. His authority rests, primarily, on his own spiritual consciousness, and on his ability to evoke some answering testi-

[1] Quoted by Auguste Sabatier: *Religions of Authority*, p. 163.

mony in the dormant spiritual consciousness of his congregations, but it is confirmed by the testimony of a great body of men and women in common with whom he has that spiritual consciousness. When he bears his testimony to the laws of righteousness, to the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ our Lord, to the pardon and peace which that forgiveness of sins has brought, and to the presence of God in human life, enabling the weakest of his children to say, I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me, he bears testimony not only to his own experience, but to that experience confirmed by ten thousand times ten thousand witnesses. He does not stand alone; unnumbered are the voices which reinforce his message with a loud Amen. The glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs, the holy Church throughout all the world, unite with him in acknowledging the Father of an infinite Majesty, his adorable, true, and only Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. He speaks for the Church universal. He is and ought to feel himself to be the voice of an innumerable silent host, and he speaks, or ought to speak, with the authority of their spiritual experiences interpreted through his utterance.

The Reformers for the authority of the Church substituted the authority of the Bible. It is not necessary for my purpose here to trace the history of the conflict in the Protestant churches between

the two conceptions of authority, — that of spiritual experience in the individual soul, and that of a written record of a revelation external to man, — for both conceptions have found their place in Protestant theology. But despite the persistence of the spiritual conception, affirmed by Zwingli, and by Luther in his earlier writings, reasserted by the more spiritually-minded of the English Puritans, reappearing in the doctrine of the Inner Light affirmed by the Friends, and again reasserting itself in what in our time is called the New Theology, it may, nevertheless, be said, in general terms, to quote again the words of Sabatier, that "the Catholic system finds divine infallibility in an admirably organized social institution, with its supreme head, the Pope; the Protestant system finds infallibility in a book."[1] It would be easy to find extreme illustrations of this doctrine of the infallibility of the book. Avoiding these, I quote, as interpretative of eighteenth-century New England Puritanism, from one of the more liberal of the Evangelical Congregational divines, Lyman Beecher. In his lectures on "Political Atheism" he declares "the impotency of reason and the light of nature to meet the exigencies of man, in time or eternity;" affirms that "the Bible, in its adaptation to our necessities, meets all our exigencies, personal, social, and civil, in a manner more rational and benignant than any other system that claims a

[1] Auguste Sabatier: *Religions of Authority*, p. 186.

parentage from God;" declares that "we must have the broad seal of Heaven, which none can counterfeit, set upon it [the Bible], or we cannot give it credence;" and affirms that this seal consists "in the miracles and prophecies connected with that book." These he thus defines:

> A miracle is such a control, or suspension, of the laws of nature, as none but God, who made the world, can accomplish; and in such relation to a revelation as give it the Divine attestation. Prophecy is a declaration of future events which no finite could foresee or conjecture, any more than it could work miracles.[1]

This theory has been held and taught by Protestant theologians in different forms: sometimes, that the Bible was dictated by the Spirit of God to the writers, as amanuenses, and that every word and letter is divine and authoritative; sometimes, that this divine authority inheres only in the original manuscripts, and that the errors in our English Bible are due to imperfections in preservation, transmission, and translation; sometimes, that inspiration did not preserve the writers from scientific error, and that the writings are infallible and inerrant only in the moral and religious realm; sometimes, that this inerrancy and authority can be predicated only of parts of the Bible, as, of the New Testament, or, of the teachings of Jesus Christ. But, in whatever form, and with whatever limitations, this doctrine of the Bible has been in-

[1] Lyman Beecher: *Works*, vol. i, Lecture IX, pp. 203–206.

culcated, underlying it has always been the same substantial conception, — that man can have no immediate and direct knowledge of God or of divine truth, that for this knowledge he is dependent upon an external revelation furnished through a book, and that the evidence that this book does furnish a trustworthy revelation is afforded by external evidences, such as miracles and prophecy.

It is not necessary to trace here the historical process by which this conception of Biblical authority has been gradually undermined. The contrast between the conception of the Bible entertained by the liberal orthodoxy of New England in the first half of the nineteenth century, and that entertained by the same school in the latter half of the nineteenth century, will be apparent to the reader by comparing Part I of "The Self-Revelation of God," by Dr. Samuel Harris, Professor of Systematic Theology in Yale University, with Dr. Lyman Beecher's two lectures, on "The Necessity of a Revelation from God to Man," and on "The Bible a Revelation from God to Man."

Two disconnected paragraphs from Dr. Harris's work must suffice here:

> If God reveals himself it must be through the medium of the finite and to finite beings. The revelation must be commensurate with the medium through which it is made and with the development of the minds to whom it is made. Hence both the revelation itself and man's apprehension of the God revealed must be progressive,

and, at any point of time, incomplete. Hence, while it is the true God who reveals himself, man's apprehension of God at different stages of his own development may be not only incomplete, but marred by gross misconceptions.

God's revelation does not consist of inditing the Bible and giving it to men to convert them to the life of faith and love. He reveals himself in the grand courses of his own action in the creation, preservation and progressive evolution of the universe, in providential and moral government, and in redemption. . . . What God reveals is himself as distinguished from a religion. He reveals himself in the experience of the person as the quickener of his faith and love, as the being with whom he communes in worship, who is with him as a present helper in the work, and the burdens, the joys, and the sorrows of his life. This communion with God is religion, but it is so because God has revealed himself, and not a religion; and the man has found God in his revelation of himself, and so has found access to him in communion.[1]

The difference between these two conceptions of the Bible is radical. The first regards the Bible as a book indited by God, and containing infallible information concerning religion which man could obtain in no other way; the second regards the Bible as a book expressing the experiences which devout men have had of God in their own souls, and have uttered in their own language, each one according to his own temperament. The statesman saw God in human conscience, and interpreted him

[1] Samuel Harris: *The Self-Revelation of God*, pp. 8, 58.

as the authority for all just law, human and divine. The historian saw God working out divine ends through all the tangled course of human history, and interpreted that history as a process of human development divinely guided and controlled to a divine result. The poet saw God in nature and in human experience, and wrote his poem, whether it were an epic, like the Book of Job, or lyrics, like those contained in the Hebrew Psalter, to interpret his vision of God, and inspire others with a like vision. The philosopher, whether ethical or theological, saw a moral order in the universe, and God inspiring that order, and making it conqueror over the chaos which sin had introduced into the world, and he wrote to give, through philosophy, an interpretation of his vision of an immanent God and his hope of the final achievement of God's kingdom on the earth. This literature has an authority, but it is spiritual, not external. The evidence which substantiates that authority is spiritual, not external. We do not believe in the Bible because we believe in miracles; it would be more true to say that we believe in miracles because we believe in the Bible. It is the character of the Bible, and its spiritual efficacy and value, not extraordinary events occurring eighteen centuries ago, which give to the Bible its authority. Says Samuel Taylor Coleridge:

> In the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words

of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit.[1]

We believe that it is inspired because we find it inspiring. Our experience confirms its revelation. We read the Twenty-third Psalm, and looking back along our pathway, our experience of life replies, God is also our Shepherd. We read the eighth chapter of Romans, and recalling our song in the night of our sorrow, our souls reply, Neither shall death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Bible is an authority because in the Bible God finds us and we find God. When the Bible contradicts our spiritual consciousness, we refuse to accept its dicta, — as when it seems to attach the divine approval to the wholesale slaughter of the Canaanites. When it contradicts our reason, we seek to find some other interpretation, — as when it seems to say that the sun stood still in order to prolong miraculously a day of battle, or that a big fish swallowed a prophet in order, on the one hand, to preserve him from drowning, and, on the other hand, to compel him to take up a mission which he had refused. The minister in our time may profitably use the Bible as an authority, but he can use it as an authority only as he uses it to

[1] S. T. Coleridge: *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, Letter II.

interpret to men their own spiritual experience, to confirm that spiritual experience, or to reveal to them truths of life to which their own spiritual experience responds with instinctive approbation. Even its distinctively historical revelations find their substantiation in the answer of the individual soul. The evidence for the Divinity of Jesus Christ is the character of Christ himself; it is the fact that when we look upon this character thus portrayed, this life thus lived, we say, This character, this life, presents a divine ideal; this character is worthy of our highest reverence, this life, of our sincerest imitation.

There is also an authority in the reason. But the authority of the preacher does not depend upon his logical powers. The reason is rather a critical than a creative faculty. The scientific method can at best only deduce hypotheses respecting the invisible world from observations of visible phenomena. The relation of the logical faculty to the religious life is well defined by Paul, in a verse which is often regarded as though it were nothing but a combination of four separated aphorisms, but which is really the Pauline philosophy of life condensed into four pregnant sentences: "Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is good."[1] Every man has a spiritual nature; he is able to look upon the things that are unseen and are eternal: let him not quench it.

[1] 1 Thess. v, 19–21.

There are prophets, "men of moral genius to whom we owe ideals of duty and visions of moral perfection which ordinary mankind could never have attained:" do not despise them. For knowledge of the outer world, study the works of the great scientists, the men of observation; for knowledge of the inner world, study the works of the poets and prophets, the men of insight. But take no man's testimony, be he scientist or prophet, with unquestioning credence. It may fairly be doubted whether the credulity which sometimes passes for faith has not inflicted on the world more injury than the skepticism which often passes for irreligion. The alleged revelations of a Joe Smith or a Mrs. Eddy, accepted by too confiding natures, have probably done more to hinder or to divert the moral progress of the race than the respectful agnosticism of Herbert Spencer or even the scoffing agnosticism of Robert Ingersoll. And this leads us to the true test by which all visions of poets and prophets are to be tried. Says Jonathan Edwards: "The degree in which our experience is productive of practice shows the degree in which our experience is spiritual and divine." Says St. Teresa: "A genuine, heavenly vision yields to her [the soul] a harvest of ineffable spiritual riches, and an admirable renewal of bodily strength." Says William James: "*The way in which it works on the whole* is Dr. Maudsley's final test of a belief. This is our own empiricist criterion; and this criterion the stoutest insisters on supernatural

origin have also been forced to use in the end." [1] These authors do but repeat, in another form, the Pauline test: Hold fast that which is good. The visions which stand the test of experience are visions whose guidance we are to accept. The function of the logical faculty is less the discovery of truth than protection from falsehood. And this, which is Paul's declaration, is the affirmation also of modern philosophy: "The greatest and perhaps sole use of philosophy is after all merely negative, and instead of discovering truth has only the modest merit of preventing error." [2]

The Christian minister must speak with power or he speaks in vain. He must overcome the currents which sweep men backward and downward toward the animal condition from which they are gradually emerging, — appetite, sensuality, avarice, lust of power, love of applause, self-conceit, self-will. This he cannot do with pleasant literary essays, pious or pungent phrase-making, theological philosophizing, or the exhibition of beliefs, once living, now dead, and preserved like mummies in the tombs of the past. He must speak with authority. That authority must be either in some external standard or in spiritual experiences which he has evoked in the souls of those to whom he is speaking. If he wishes

[1] William James: *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 19–21, where these quotations from Edwards and St. Teresa may be found.

[2] This saying is attributed to Immanuel Kant, though I have not been able to verify the quotation.

to depend on an external authority, the Roman Catholic, or the Greek Catholic, or the Anglican Catholic Church is a better external authority than a book, because it is more vital and more flexible. It is able to adjust its teachings to the differing needs of different generations. He who has no spiritual authority in himself, and therefore can awaken no spiritual authority in his hearers, should either abandon the Christian ministry or seek to fulfill it in some branch of the Catholic Church. If, on the other hand, he depends for his authority on his spiritual experience and on his power to evoke spiritual experience in the men and women before him, then he belongs in some branch of the Protestant Church.

The fundamental question is easily stated: Is the minister's authority without or within? Have we preachers to go to a vicegerent and representative of God, or have we to go to God himself, sitting at our side, walking in our path, manifesting himself in our experience? If the latter, we may enforce the authority with which we speak by the concurrent testimony of the living Church, and by the revelatory experiences recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and we may use the scientific method to test those experiences, fearlessly asking, Do they work well? and fearlessly and impartially recording the answer of history to that question. But the real secret of our authority must lie in our own consciousness of sin forgiven

and life imparted by an ever-present God, and in our power to reproduce in other souls the life which God has produced in our own.

Before passing to consider what are the qualifications necessary to enable the modern minister to give with authority that message of peace and power which it is his peculiar and distinctive function to give to the world, I wish to consider more fully the distinctive character of that message.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE INDIVIDUAL MESSAGE OF THE MINISTRY

THE prophet, says Ewald, is one who "has seen or heard something which does not concern himself, or not himself alone, which will not let him rest, for which he must work by his words. . . . He has exactly the feeling of having received a special trust, a *mission*, an errand from his God, distinctly to declare, in spite of all hindrances, at the right place the higher voice which he cannot any longer hide and suppress within him. He acts and speaks not of his own accord; a higher One impels him, to resist whom is sin; it is his God, who is also the God of those to whom he must speak. And those to whom he speaks often come by his proclamation to feel *their* God as alive within them; they hear what they sought for but did not find; they surmise and recognize in him who declares to them what they had long sought, the preacher and interpreter of his own and their God, the mediator between them and God."[1] It is this divine impulse supplying the motive, this divine theme furnishing the message, and this divine object to bring men to feel their God as alive within them, which distinguishes the

[1] G. H. A. von Ewald: *Prophets of the Old Testament*, i, 7.

Christian minister from men of other professions, which in some respects closely resemble his own. He is both like and unlike the journalist, the author, the teacher, and the moral reformer. A comparison of the Christian ministry with these analogous professions will help to make clear his specific function.

I. The office of the journalist is twofold: to report the history of the day, and to interpret its meaning. In the first work, that of reporter, the modern American press exhibits great enterprise, though not always great discrimination; in the second work, that of interpreter, it is not always equally successful. Its interpretations are affected by the demands of its subscribers, by the interests of its advertisers, by the relation of events to its favored political or ecclesiastical organization; and when it escapes all these belittling, if not malign influences, it is still apt to consider the immediate, not the ultimate, the provincial, not the world-wide, effect of the event whose significance it endeavors to explain.

The minister is not a reporter of events. He may on occasion make himself one by a first-hand study of some public incident on which he wishes to speak. He may go to the coal-fields of Pennsylvania during a great coal strike, or to Colorado during a time of mob law, and return to give his congregation the results of his investigations. It is always doubtful, however, whether he can investigate as well as the

trained reporter, or secure as accurate and trustworthy results as he might secure by a careful collection and comparison of different newspaper reports. On the other hand, the work of interpretation is sometimes the minister's; all the more so, because this function is so often ignored, refused, or ill performed by the journalist. He may take a current event for his text, as Christ on one occasion took the massacre of the Galileans and the disaster at the tower of Siloam for a text.[1] The application of eternal principles to current problems may often be his duty, as it was the duty, courageously fulfilled, by the Hebrew prophets.

In this work of interpreting public events there are three principles by which the minister should be guided.

He should beware of preaching to the newspapers; beware of selecting a topic because the general public is interested in it and he shares the general interest. The sermon is a message to the congregation that listens to the preacher, and to none other. If, as the minister thinks of that congregation, of the men immersed in the temptations of business life, of wives and mothers wearied with household cares, or alternately dazzled and satiated with society charms, of the young men and maidens with their eager hopes, their perilous surroundings, their vibrant life, the theme which it appears to him will help them most in the experiences of the

[1] Luke xiii, 1–5.

coming week is the coal strike in Pennsylvania or the mob law in Colorado, he may make that his theme. But he should select it solely because it is what his congregation needs, not because it is what the daily press are talking about.

If he selects such a theme, he should speak of the duties of his own congregation. He should not chide the violence of workingmen in preaching to a congregation of employers, or the greed of capitalists in preaching to a congregation of workingmen, or the superstition and ignorance of negroes in preaching to Anglo-Saxons, or the cruelty of an Anglo-Saxon mob in preaching to a congregation of negroes. If every white preacher would preach to inspire white men to take up the white men's burden, and every negro preacher to inspire negro men to bear bravely their black men's burden, and every preacher to employers would speak of the duties of employers to the employed, and every preacher to workingmen of the duties of workingmen to their employers, the race problem and the labor problem would be much nearer their solution than they are to-day. Class preaching can have but one effect, — to intensify class prejudice and widen the gulf between the classes; and class preaching, by which I mean preaching to one class on the sins and the duties of another class, is unfortunately very common in America.

In preaching on current events the minister should interpret those events in the light of eternal

principles. He should measure them by their relation, not to a party, nor to a church, but to the kingdom of God. He should tell us whether they are promoting or hindering that righteousness and peace and joy which constitute the kingdom of God. He should give to his congregation the light which is thrown upon such events by the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule. He should get for himself, and give to his congregation, the long look, should treat current events in the spirit in which the Hebrew prophets treated them, should judge them not by twentieth-century standards, but by the standards of the Last Great Day. These three principles are all illustrated by Christ's method; thus, on the occasion to which I have alluded above,[1] he preached to his immediate auditors, he turned their thoughts from the calamity which had befallen others to the sins which they themselves had perpetrated, and he brought to bear on those sins the light of the last judgment.

II. Literature, "in its more restricted sense," is defined by the Century Dictionary as "the class of writings in which expression and form in connection with ideas of permanent or universal interest are characteristic or essential features." The sermon, then, is literature, and the preacher an author; for the sermon is a writing or speech "in which expression and form in connection with ideas of permanent and universal interest are characteristic and essen-

[1] See ante, p. 110.

tial features." And yet the difference between the work of the preacher and the work of the author, whether poet, dramatist, novelist, historian, biographer, or essayist, is fundamental. The emphasis of the author is on the form and expression, of the preacher on the ideas of permanent and universal interest; the object of the author is to interest, of the preacher to convince and comfort; the author seeks to interpret life, the preacher to impart life; if the poem, the novel, the biography, the history, or even the essay is didactic, it is defective; if the sermon is not didactic, it is no true sermon. We ask concerning the book, Is it artistic? The sermon is sometimes the more effective for being inartistic. In brief, the author is an artist; the test of his book, poem, or story is its artistic quality. The preacher is not an artist; the test of his sermon is its life-giving power. A sermon is not an oration. If there can be anything more foolish than for a congregation to imagine that one man can give fifty-two orations a year, it is for that man himself to imagine that he can do so. The great orators of history, Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke, Chatham, Webster, Calhoun, Sumner, have given possibly a score of orations in a lifetime. It would be preposterous to expect from a minister two score of orations and more a year.

The power of a sermon is interpreted in that Roman Catholic title for the priest, — Father. The father gathers his children about him in the gloam-

ing and talks to them; tells them a story, gives them counsel. It is not an artistic story; it is not very eloquent counsel. If it were taken down by a short-hand writer and printed in a book, it would not be read by a great number of readers. But the children want it, and they would rather have the counsel that father gives than any other counsel from any other man. Its power is due to the personal relation. The power of the sermon must be the power of a personal relation; the counsel of a personal friend to personal friends; the revelation of God by a soul full of his Spirit to a congregation who need him. Preachers should be afraid of great sermons; their congregations are. The minister may, perhaps, preach one occasionally by accident, but it always ought to be an accident. The value of the sermon lies in its power to impart life to the congregation. If the congregation go away admiring the sermon, the minister has failed; if they go away forgetting the sermon, but carrying with them an impulse to a new life, coming they know not whence or how, he has succeeded. If, when he has preached his sermon, some one comes up after the service and says, "That was a great sermon you gave us this morning," let the preacher go home for an hour of humiliation, fasting, and prayer; but if he says, "Thank you! you helped me this morning," let the preacher go home to give God thanks.

III. The preacher is a teacher, but more than a teacher. The two professions are alike in that they

both aim at the development of character through the ministry of truth. And yet they differ, both in the *immediate* object of their respective vocations and in the *ultimate* source of their power. They both address themselves to the will; but the one reaches it indirectly through the intellectual powers, the other directly through the motive powers.

It is the function of the teacher to gather out of the reservoired experience of the past what it has for us and give it to the oncoming generation. We wonder sometimes that the world does not grow wise more rapidly. Six thousand years, and so little progress! Not six thousand years; the world of men is only about forty or fifty years old, sixty at the utmost; for the world of men is no older than a generation. The babes come into the infant school knowing no more than their fathers knew, and, when they have learned what this life has to teach them, they go out into whatever school there lies beyond, we know not. It is the function of the teacher to take the reservoired experience of the past and give as much of it as is possible to the children as they come upon the stage. In this educational process, control, discipline, training, are necessary, but they are incidental and subsidiary. As the process of education goes on, this disciplinary work lessens, and finally disappears in the university, where there is practically no discipline, and the pupils are left to self-government. The education itself also tends to affect the character in the springs of action.

Thus mathematics perfectly taught tends to develop exactitude of character, and literature breadth of human sympathy. But this tendency again is incidental and subsidiary. The object of the teacher is to give his pupils the benefit of the world's experience, and he largely leaves that experience to convey its own lessons. The best teachers moralize but little.

The preacher, on the other hand, appeals not to the experience of mankind, but to the intuitions of the individual soul; he does not seek to inform a pupil as to the experiences of others, he endeavors to awaken in the heart of his hearer a new experience. His object is to bring the individual soul into communion with the living God, and so inspire in him a life of loyalty to God, and to do this by inspiring in the individual such a perception of the Infinite, manifested in Jesus Christ, as will awaken in him the desire, and form within him the purpose, to lead a Christlike life and attain a Christlike character. Let us recur to Professor Huxley's definition of education: "Education is the instruction of intellect in the laws of nature . . . and the fashioning of the affections and the will into an earnest and loving desire to be in harmony with those laws." [1] It is the primary work of the teacher to instruct the intellect, the primary work of the ministry to fashion the affections and the will: the first furnishes information, the second power;

[1] See ante, p. 58.

the first develops the observing and reasoning faculties, the second the motives; the first trains the pilot, the second educates the engineer. No doubt the teacher promotes morality, and the preacher intelligence; but intelligence is the professed aim of the teacher, and morality the professed aim of the preacher; the specific work of the teacher is training, of the preacher inspiration.

But even more than the difference in the respective aims of the teacher and the preacher is the difference in the secret of their power. The teacher draws upon the outward and visible experience of mankind, the preacher appeals to the inner and the spiritual life of men; the power of the one is learning, of the other piety; the one imparts what he has acquired from the experience of others, the other transmits what he has received from his God. No one can be a good teacher without scholarship, because it is the function of the teacher to impart to others what scholarship has imparted to him; but there have been many efficient teachers not remarkable for their godliness. No one can be a good preacher without godliness, because it is the function of the preacher to give men acquaintance with God; but there have been many effective preachers who were not scholars. Says Herbert Spencer:

> Unlike the ordinary consciousness, the religious consciousness is concerned with that which lies beyond the sphere of sense. A brute thinks only of the things which

can be seen, heard, tested, etc., and the like is true of the untaught child, the deaf-mute, and the lowest savage. But the developing man has thoughts about existences which he regards as usually intangible, inaudible, invisible; and yet which he regards as operative upon him.[1]

The teacher deals primarily with the ordinary consciousness, and his power depends upon his accurate knowledge of what lies within the sphere of sense; the preacher deals with that which lies beyond the ordinary consciousness, and his power depends on his ability to make real to men and operative upon them a spiritual world which is intangible, inaudible, and invisible. The teacher draws his lessons from what has been, the preacher awakens a hope of what yet may be; the teacher conveys a knowledge of the actual, the preacher inspires a conception of the possible; the teacher enforces wisdom by lessons drawn from the history of past experience, the preacher presents a realized ideal of life in a Divine Person who teaches us the principles of life, and reveals to us the spirit of life, and so shows us what we may ourselves become.[2]

IV. The minister is a moral reformer, but he is more than a moral reformer, and he makes a mis-

[1] Herbert Spencer: *Religious Retrospect and Prospect*, "Ecclesiastical Institutions," p. 827.

[2] See this distinction between secular teaching and the work of the preacher stated with characteristic clearness and beauty by James Martineau, in "Factors of Spiritual Growth in Modern Society," *Essays*, iv, 75–91.

take if he substitutes leading a moral reform for preaching the gospel.

Out of personal sins grow social abuses; out of self-indulgent appetite, the saloon; out of ambition, political despotism; out of covetousness, industrial oppression. The reformer attacks the social abuse, — the saloon, the political despotism, the industrial oppression. The minister may or may not join with him in this attack. Whether he does or not will depend partly upon his temperament, partly upon the nature of the institutions of his country, partly upon the conditions of the time in which he lives. But whatever his temperament, whatever the institutions or the conditions of his time, if he is a true preacher he is not content merely to attack the social abuses which have grown out of personal sin. He will seek to extirpate the appetite, not merely to overthrow the saloon; to inspire ambition with the spirit of service, not merely to destroy the monarchy, the machine, or the boss; to make acquisitiveness subservient to benevolence, not merely to substitute free labor for slavery, or a socialistic order for unregulated competition. For he sees that unregulated appetite is responsible for the dyspeptic as well as for the drunkard, that ignoble ambition substitutes the irresponsible boss for the absolute czar, and greed of wealth inflicts parallel if not equal cruelties on the slaves of America, the serfs in Russia, and the factory hands in England. If the minister attacks injurious social or politi-

cal forces, as slavery in industry or monarchy in government, it is because these forms violate the laws of God, thwart the free development of the individual, and prevent the consummation of the kingdom of God. To the moral reformer reform is an end, to the preacher it is only a means. His object is always the life of God in the soul of man, and so the kingdom of God in the social order.[1] His inspiration is always the love of God, and of men as the children of God, and a hope in him as the Redeemer of the world.

Henry Ward Beecher was, partly owing to his temperament, partly to his Puritan education, and partly to the times in which he lived, preëminently a moral reformer. But no one has stated more clearly than he this principle, that to the preacher moral reform ought always to be a means, not an end, the end being the kingdom of God, and that to him the inspiration ought to be not merely humanity, but love for and loyalty to Jesus Christ.

Our highest and strongest reason for seeking justice among men is *not* the benefit to men themselves, exceedingly strong as that motive is and ought to be. We do not join the movement party of our times simply because we are inspired by an inward and constitutional benevolence. We are conscious of both these motives and of many other collateral ones; but we are earnestly conscious of another feeling stronger than either, that lives unimpaired when these faint, yea, that gives vigor

[1] See ante, chap. ii, pp. 47–54.

and persistence to these feelings when they are discouraged; and that is a strong, personal, enthusiastic love for Jesus Christ. I regard the movement of the world toward justice and rectitude to be of His inspiration. I believe my own aspirations, having a base in my natural faculties, to be influenced and directed by Christ's spirit. The mingled affection and adoration which I feel for Him is the strongest feeling that I know. Whether I will or not, whether it be a phantasy or a sober sentiment, the fact is the same nevertheless, that that which will give pleasure to Christ's heart and bring to my consciousness a smile of gladness on His face in behalf of my endeavor, is incalculably more to me than any other motive. I would work for the slave for his own sake, but I am sure that I would work ten times as earnestly for the slave for Christ's sake.[1]

V. But the minister is not only more than a journalist, an author, a secular teacher, or a moral reformer; he is also more than a teacher of theology.

Theology is not religion. Religion is the life of God in the soul of man; theology is what philosophers have thought about that life.

The scorn for creeds is a thoughtless scorn. He who says, I do not believe in creeds, expresses a creed by that saying. "I do not believe in creeds" is his creed. Whoever thinks on any subject to a purpose and with a result has a creed, for the result is his creed. If he thinks on politics and is a free-trader, free-trade is his creed; if on sociology and

[1] Henry Ward Beecher: Quoted in *Biography* by Mrs. Beecher et al., p. 269; in *Biography* by Lyman Abbott, pp. 193, 194.

is an individualist, individualism is his creed; if he thinks to any purpose on religion, the result of that thinking is his creed. "Religion is a weakness which a man must outgrow on attaining maturity" is the creed of David Friedrich Strauss.[1] This is as truly a creed as is the Westminster Confession of Faith or the Thirty-nine Articles.

But though creeds are important and are a necessary result of serious thinking, they are not life. Theology is important, but it is not religion. Astronomy is what men think about stars, but astronomy is not stars; botany is what men think about flowers, but botany is not flowers; so theology is what men think about the life of God in the soul of man, but theology is not the life of God in the soul of man, and it cannot take the place of that life.

Men come to church for religion: that is, for life. To be more specific, they come for the fruit of the Spirit: for love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, serviceableness, fidelity, meekness, self-control. When they get only theology, that is, only what philosophers have thought about this fruit of the Spirit, and the cause which produces it, and the methods of its development, and the consequences of lacking it, they go away dissatisfied. To-morrow morning the reader will go down to breakfast and will expect his rolls and coffee; if instead of rolls and coffee his wife should read him a lecture on hygiene, he would go away dissatisfied;

[1] See ante, p. 35.

and if that should happen often, he would go somewhere else for breakfast. It is quite important that the housewife should understand the principles of hygiene in order that she may know how to prepare breakfast; but what we want is breakfast, not a lecture on hygiene. So what men and women go to church for is religion, not a lecture about religion; and when they go to church and get, not religion, but a philosophy about religion, they stop going. It is not strange.

Next Sunday morning a man comes to church. He is dissatisfied with himself. He has wasted his time; he has been mean in business; he has been cross with his wife; he has been tyrannical with his children; he is half conscious of it, and is discontented with himself. Perhaps his feelings are deeper. Perhaps he looks back on a life that has been thrown away; perhaps he has deep within himself the feeling that he dares not meet his God, and dares not face the future, and, so feeling, goes to church. The preacher announces his text and proceeds to give him a lecture on the atonement. He explains to him that there is a theory of the atonement that Christ died to satisfy the wrath of God; a theory that Christ died to satisfy the law of God; a theory that Christ died in order to produce a certain impression on the human mind; a theory that Christ died in order to impart the life of God to man; and then, at the end, the preacher, in order to make it sound like a sermon, closes with

the exhortation, "Accept Christ and be saved;" and the man goes away unsatisfied. He goes to another church, and another preacher takes the same text and preaches also on the atonement. But he has before him this aching, hungering, needy heart, and he says to his congregation:

"When you hear these words, 'Prepare to meet your God,' are you afraid to meet him? I tell you that Christ has died, and whatever wrath there is in God against sin is met and answered, and God's love is offered to you. Do you say, 'God may forgive me, but I cannot forgive myself; his law rises up against me; and my own conscience condemns me?' I tell you that his law is satisfied, and his Son, your Saviour, has come to bring you peace. Do you say, 'I do not repent; I cannot repent; nothing that I have done to another or to myself moves me?' I tell you Christ died for you. I put before you his bleeding hands and feet and pierced heart that you may know what God's love is, that God's love may move you. Do you say, 'I cannot arise; I cannot feel; I am dead?' I tell you that the crucified Christ stands at the door of the grave and says, 'Lazarus, come forth!' I tell you that God loves us and raises us up even when we are dead in trespasses and sins. Arise, begin a new life, for you are a new man if you choose to be a new man." One has delivered a lecture, the other has preached a sermon. One has given his congregation theology, the other has given them religion.

Or perhaps it is a mother who has come to the church. She has had a hard week and is tired out. The children have been cross, the husband has been impatient, or indifferent and unloving; the cook has left without notice; everything has gone wrong. The wearied wife thinks it is hardly worth while trying to live any longer. She questions whether she will go to church, whether she would not better stay at home and read a book. But habit is strong upon her, and she goes. The minister takes for his text, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God."[1] "Now," she says, "I am going to get a sermon of comfort." The minister proceeds to give her a lecture on the Higher Criticism. He says: "It used to be thought that there was but one Isaiah; but there are two Isaiahs — at least two, perhaps a score, and I am going to prove it to you." And then he puts on his boxing-gloves and begins to attack the old traditions. There are always a few people in every congregation who admire the courage of such a man, though it really does not require much courage to conduct a boxing-match with a stuffed dummy. Others — a few — wonder at the learning, saying, "What a scholarly minister we have got!" But the poor mother goes back to her home and says (that is, she would say it if she dared, even to herself), "I really would have done better had I stayed at home and read a good story." And so far as

[1] Isaiah xl, 1.

the sermon is concerned she is right; she would have done better.

On the other hand, another minister, who believes that there are two Isaiahs, preaches on this same text. He says nothing about two Isaiahs, but he uses his conviction that the second Isaiah lived toward the close of the exile. He says:

"This people Israel had sinned against God; their life had gone awry; they had been carried away from their homes; they had spent seventy years in exile; they were discouraged; they believed God had deserted them, that he had forgotten them, that he cared no more for them. Then came this message to the prophet, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; ye have received double for all your sins.' Even the prophet could not believe the words, and he said, 'What kind of a message can I bring to thy people? They are but grass. They are perishing.' And the answer came back to him, 'Though they are but grass and perish, the word of God endureth for ever. Take comfort and be strong.'"[1] Then, with this mother in his mind, and with similar weary, worn, discouraged hearts in his mind, the minister says: "You think there is no God. Have you more reason to think that there is no God than had Judea in exile? You are discouraged. Have you more reason to be discouraged than they had? You have sinned and think that you are suffering the punishment

[1] Isaiah xl, 1 ff.

for your sins, and that there is no help for you. Have you more reason to think that there is no help for you than they had? Have you sinned more than Judah had sinned? To you, in your loneliness, your discouragement, your remorse, the message of the Gospel is, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.'" And the minister brings comfort to this mother, and sends her back with new hope in her heart, and she will come next Sunday. The one preacher has lectured on the Higher Criticism, the other has used it.

What I have said here respecting the difference between religion and theology, and the demand of congregations for religion rather than for theology, I said some years ago in an address delivered to a ministerial gathering in New England. The address was published in "The Outlook," and it brought to me from a correspondent the following letter:

I should like to ask one question: Do you not think that with the burdened man and the grieving woman there comes also to church the person whose difficulties are intellectual, who doubts, to whom the old orthodoxy has almost closed the way of faith, and who needs, who hungers for, an exposition of truth almost theological? I can conceive such a one enlightened, brought to the Cross indeed, by a discussion of the theories of the Atonement in which difficulties and misconceptions were removed. Of course, what such a person needs is the fact of an atonement rather than the theory explaining it; but to explode some of the theories might open the

way to the fact, the reality. Your own preaching, it seems to me, has been peculiarly to the class who have been led to a larger religion through a simpler and truer theology.[1]

The answer to this letter is twofold. First, the minister may sometimes be simply a teacher. He may give lectures in place of sermons. He may tell his congregation in a series of lectures what is the New Theology, or what is the New Criticism, or what is the New Sociology. This is often an advantageous thing to do; but he should understand clearly the difference between teaching and preaching, between a lecture and a sermon. It is also true that it is one function of the preacher, in and through his sermon, to correct misapprehensions and remove intellectual difficulties; but he should never forget that his object in preaching should be to remove those intellectual difficulties which prevent the development of the spiritual life, and because they prevent the development of the spiritual life; that his aim must always be, not the elucidation of theology, but the impartation of life. The world is not saved by theology, either old or new; it is saved by the life of God imparted to the soul of man. There is, as Martineau has said, plenty of scope for the young prophet who will bring into his mission the rationality and veracity of modern thought, provided it is accompanied with the faith and fervor which accompanied the ancient thought. But

[1] *The Outlook*, December 9, 1899.

rationality and veracity of modern thought are powerless to do the work of the ministry unless they are vitalized by and made a vehicle for a simple faith and a sincere fervor.

To sum this chapter up in a paragraph: The minister is sometimes an interpreter of current events, but he is more than a journalist; his sermons should be literature, but he is more than an author; he is an instructor in truth, but he is more than a teacher; he seeks the regeneration of society, but he is more than a moral reformer; he is a teacher of the truth about God, but he is more than a teacher of theology. He is a minister of religion, that is, of the life of God in the soul of man. The spiritual hunger of humanity is well expressed in the words of the General Confession: "We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare Thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore Thou those who are penitent; according to Thy promises declared unto mankind, in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of Thy holy name." [1]

The message of the Christian minister is the answer of the Gospel to this "cry of the human."

[1] Book of Common Prayer.

It is the message of Jesus Christ to the woman that was a sinner, "Thy sins are forgiven;" it is the message of Jesus Christ to the fishermen, "Follow me;" it is the message of Jesus Christ to his disciples bereft of his presence for a second time by the Ascension, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." It is the threefold message of pardon for the past, guidance for the future, and power to achieve. The mission of the Christian minister is interpreted for him by his Master's commission, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." [1] He is to bring men into living connection with the living God; he is to inspire them with the purpose to possess the spirit and follow the example of Jesus Christ; he is to teach them what following Christ in this twentieth century involves. The mission of the minister is interpreted for him by the words of the Apostle Paul: "And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the holy in the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come unto the unity of the faith and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect manhood, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

[1] Matt. xxviii, 19, 20. [2] Eph. iv, 11–13.

His work is first to bring individuals into Christ-likeness of character by imparting to them newness of life. It is also to transform, through the unity of faith, a heterogeneous society into a kingdom of Christ. It is both individual and social. The consideration of this social function of the Christian minister, and what it demands of him in our time, is the subject of our next chapter.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SOCIAL MESSAGE OF THE MINISTRY

THE theme of Christ's preaching was the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God. Matthew sums up the first preaching in this sentence: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Luke tells us that he defined thus his mission: "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent." When the disciples were ready for their mission, this was the message which he gave to them: "As ye go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." His disciples were told to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven."[1] A comparison of the Scripture texts, especially those uttered by Jesus Christ concerning this kingdom of God or of heaven, makes clear certain of its characteristics. This kingdom of God is at hand. It is one which the poor in spirit, the humble, the children easily enter. It is one which is open to the pagan nations. They will come from afar to enter it, while some of the children of Abraham will be shut out. It is a kingdom which it is difficult for the rich to enter,

[1] Matt. iv, 17; Luke iv, 43; Matt. x, 7, vi, 10.

and impossible for the self-satisfied and the self-righteous to enter. It is growing up on the earth; it is like a seed planted and growing secretly, men know not how. It grows from little beginnings to a great consummation. It grows under difficulty, and its growth depends upon circumstances. Sometimes it grows rapidly, sometimes slowly; sometimes it grows a little while, and then fails and falls back again. Other things grow as well as the kingdom of God, evil as well as good, tares as well as wheat. It is like a feast; the rich, the noble, the aristocratic, the educated, the cultivated are invited, and they make excuses; one is too much occupied with his business, another with his property, another with domestic affairs; then the highways and hedges are searched for the poor, the lame, the halt. But to all the message is the same. The table is set; all things are ready. Come! The kingdom is here; you have not to wait.[1]

And yet, though it grows up here, and is here, and the message given to the disciples is to tell men that it is here, men cannot see it. They cannot say of it: "Lo here, or lo there!" It is invisible. In order to see it a man must be born from above. Men cannot see it unless a new power of vision is given to them. It is not ostensible; it is not palpable. It is earthly, because it is on the earth, and

[1] Matt. iv, 17, v, 3, xviii, 4; Luke xiii, 28, 29; Matt. xix, 24, xxiii, 13; Mark iv, 26, 27; Matt. xiii, 31, 32, 3-9, 24-30, 47-50; Luke xiv, 13-24; Mark ix, 1.

yet it is celestial, because it is spiritual. It is human, because it is made up of men; it is divine, because it is the kingdom of God. And when the consummation of human history is accomplished, the consummation will be written in this sentence: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." The kingdoms of this world — still world kingdoms, the politics still human politics, the rule still human rule, and yet transformed so that the kingdoms of this world themselves are the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. But we are not to wait until the drama is over; we are not to wait for the kingdom of God to be seen in the celestial city; the new Jerusalem is now coming down out of heaven to be among men. We are to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven." The ideal is celestial, the realization earthly; the subject, men; the centre and source and power, divine.[1]

There have been in the post-apostolic Church three conceptions respecting this kingdom of God and its coming on the earth. There has been, first, the notion that it would come with some great cataclysm, some great spiritual and supernatural revolution. So the Jews expected a kingdom that should come with blare of trumpets and waving of flags. So, apparently, the primitive Church expected it, thinking that the risen Christ would come back in coronation glory to establish it. As Christ did not

[1] Luke xvii, 21; John iii, 3; Rev. xi, 15, xxi, 2; Matt. vi, 10.

come in coronation glory to establish the kingdom, there arose the conception that the kingdom of God was the Church, and the Church the kingdom : the King was absent, but he had appointed a vicar to take his place, and this vicar of God, this Pope of Rome, stood in the lieu of God, and this Church ruled over by him was the kingdom of God, and men that were baptized entered into that kingdom through their baptism. Men could then point at the cathedral and at the mass and at the priesthood, and say : " Lo here, lo there ; behold the kingdom of God ! " The Church and the kingdom of God were identified. As the Church disappointed men, there arose a third conception, that the kingdom was not to come on earth at all. It was celestial, not terrestrial, and the earth was only a place of trial by which men worthy of the kingdom were selected, or a place of preparation by which men worthy of the kingdom were prepared for it. Men still continued to pray, " Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven ; " but they no longer had the faith that it would or could come on earth. They still read such declarations as, " This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," [1] and such interpretations of that declaration as the prophecy, " The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ," but they no longer believed these prophecies. They regarded faith as an experience by which they could

[1] 1 John v, 4.

escape from the world, not as a power by which they could conquer it; and the future as having in it the destruction of the kingdoms of this world, not their transformation into a kingdom of God in which his will would be done as it is in heaven.

In our time we are returning to the apostolic conception of the kingdom of God, — that it is to come by the spirit of Christ gradually pervading the kingdoms of this world, and so gradually transforming them. This was Christ's conception: the kingdom is like leaven entering and pervading the whole lump. It was Paul's conception: the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in holiness of spirit. It was John's conception: he saw "the new Jerusalem coming down from God *out* of heaven" to be "the tabernacle of God among men." [1] The minister, if he follows his Master, accepts his Master's commission, and endeavors to carry on toward its completion his Master's mission, is not merely to be a preacher of glad tidings to individuals. He is not merely to be an evangelist to solitary pilgrims, bidding them flee from the City of Destruction. He is to be the herald of a new social order; he is to aim at nothing less than making a celestial city out of the City of Destruction; he is to be the inbringer and the upbuilder of a new earth wherein dwells righteousness.

The message of the ministry, as it is interpreted by the Evangelical faith, has found expression in

[1] Rev. xxi, 3.

five pregnant words : revelation, redemption, regeneration, atonement, and sacrifice. These five words have their personal meaning as applied to the individual. On that meaning in the past, perhaps not too great, but certainly too exclusive stress has been laid. For they all have a corporate or social meaning, and this corporate or social meaning the minister must grasp if he would fulfill the mission which he has accepted, and for the fulfillment of which no age has ever offered such opportunities as the present.

I. Revelation is a personal word; a revelation of God through individual men to individual men ; the unveiling of God through Moses and David and Isaiah and Paul to the individual reader of the Bible, and to each individual according to his spiritual capacity. But this is not all, it is not even chiefly what revelation means.

Says the late Dr. Samuel Harris of Yale Theological Seminary : " The Bible is not a collection of truths formulated in propositions, which God from time to time whispered in the ear to be communicated to the world as the unchanging formulas of thought and life for all time." Revelation is "God's majestic march through history, redeeming man from sin." [1] " Arise, shine," cries Isaiah to Israel ; " for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." [2] Israel itself is to be a

[1] Samuel Harris : *The Self-Revelation of God*, xxx, 458, 459.

[2] Isaiah lx, 1.

revelation to the world ; because in Israel God is to dwell, therefore through Israel God is to be revealed. The Bible is what it has well been called, "the message of Israel." Our prejudice against the Jewish people is as unnatural as it is unchristian ; for they held that religion which we revere, while yet it was a bud, before it had blossomed out into Christianity. To them we are indebted for the faith that there is one God ; that he is a righteous God and demands righteousness from his children, and demands nothing else ; and that he will help them to attain righteousness if they will accept his help. Out from the Jewish nation shines this first beginning of the light that is to illuminate all the nations of the earth. But God has not stopped his majestic march. He did not cease to walk in human history when the canon was closed. He has been majestically marching through all the centuries. It is not to Israel only that he has said, "Arise, shine ;" he no less emphatically says it to America. And it is no less the duty of the modern prophet to interpret this message to the thought and to the conscience of the American people. The function of the Christian ministry is not merely to make individuals luminous by inspiring in them the life of Christ ; it is not merely to make the Church luminous by gathering into it the Christian light-bearers ; it is to make the nation a light-bearer to all the nations of the world.

Our history gives us some illustration of this

truth, because it records some fulfillment of this duty by the nation. We have opened the gates which Isaiah said should not be closed. We have called the uttermost parts of the earth to share with us in our inheritance, and they have come to us, — all races, all classes, all conditions, — and we have borne, by our treatment of the foreigner on this shore, a witness to the brotherhood of man such as no nation ever before has borne in the history of mankind. Slavery was fastened upon us. It grew with our growth, and strengthened with our strength; but when at last it threatened the life of the nation, the nation armed itself, not simply for union, — though it took much money and much blood to learn the lesson God had to teach us, — but for liberty as well; and when the four years of agony were over, we had borne a witness to brotherhood in tones which had echoed around the globe. Our foreign policy also affords an illustration of the way in which a nation may be made a revelation of God, a light to lighten the Gentiles. When the Boxer movement took possession of the Chinese people, as of old the demon took possession of the unhappy boy and cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him, America was the one nation that insisted upon recognizing the reality of the Chinese nationality and appealing to the conscience of the Chinese people; the one nation whose guns were not trained against that Chinese fort, and whose soldiers, when the ministers had been

released, took no share in the looting, plundering, and devastating expeditions that were miscalled punitive. The Chinese received from the fires that Russia and Germany and France lighted a revelation concerning so-called Christianity which it will take centuries to erase from their minds. They have received from our flag a revelation of Christianity of which, on the whole, we need not be ashamed.

But the end has not been reached. So long as in our country there remain prejudices to separate Jew and Christian, Roman Catholic and Protestant, foreigner and native American, African and Anglo-Saxon, so long there will remain need of prophets to teach that One is our Father which is in heaven, and that we are all brethren. So long as there are selfish men eager to appropriate the wealth of the subject peoples who have fallen into our keeping, and indifferent men, desirous to leave them to themselves, either because they are unwilling to endure what taking up the white man's burden imposes on the nation, or because they distrust the capacity of the nation to enter on new and untried duties toward an undeveloped people, so long will there be need of Christian prophets to bear witness to the nation that we are debtor to the poor and ignorant of all lands, and especially of those to whom God's providence has appointed us as guardians, that by our justice, our loyalty to liberty, our faith in God and in man as God's child, we

may develop a human brotherhood in Porto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines. The nation itself is to be a revelation of Christianity to other peoples, and it is the function of the Christian ministry to lay that duty on the American people, to inspire them with courage to undertake it, and to indicate the principles by which they are to be guided in so great an undertaking.

II. Redemption has a personal meaning. It is the saving of the individual life from self-destruction by sin. But redemption is more than personal; it is organic, it is corporate. Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, not some sins from some men in the world. God is majestically marching through history, redeeming not elect individuals merely, but redeeming the world. Christ does not come as an angel or messenger might come to the imprisoned French in the Conciergerie in the time of the Revolution, to call out one or another from the fateful guillotine; he comes to destroy the guillotine, and establish law and order and peace where before was anarchy and ruin.

History is the interpreter of God's redeeming work, and what does history tell us? When Paul wrote to the Romans, "I am not ashamed of the glad tidings of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation," [1] government was an absolute despotism; labor was wholly servile; the family was

[1] Rom. i, 16.

a commercial partnership which might be dissolved by either husband or wife at any time; there were no schools for the education of the people; and the pagan religion did not even pretend to try to make men better, — it devoted itself to appeasing the wrath of angry gods or bribing the favor of corruptible ones. For nineteen centuries Christ has been majestically marching through the world, and wherever he has gone, governments have ceased to be the Old World despotisms they once were; the shackles have dropped from the wrists of the slave; the commercial conception of marriage has disappeared, though relics of the ancient paganism from which the world is emerging still appear in too many of our States; the public school for the education of the people has been first planted by the Church and then taken up and carried on by the State; and religion has become an instrument for the making of men, and its ministers and priests are endeavoring to bring to the people a message that will make them happier, wiser, better, more worthy to be called Christ's men.

We are not as a Christian Church simply to redeem individuals; we are to carry on the work which Christ has been carrying on through the centuries, — a work of world redemption. In the old slave days single slaves occasionally broke away from slavery, crossed the Ohio River, and were aided by some Abolitionist to escape to Canada; and occasionally some preacher of right-

eousness gathered money from his congregation to purchase a single slave girl and set her free. But when the fullness of time came, Abraham Lincoln signed the proclamation which said to every slave in America, "You are free," and changed the labor condition of one half the nation. Christ has come into the world not merely to aid escaping fugitives here and there; he has come to say to all mankind, "You are free;" and the work of the Church is to secure and complete that emancipation here and now, on this globe.

III. Regeneration is individual. Each individual soul must be born into the spiritual life as each individual soul must be born into the earthly life. But regeneration is more than individual; it is corporate, it is social. The community, in its industry, its government, its social order, is to be born from above.

Socialism and Christianity are alike in that both of them seek a new social order.[1] They are unlike in the method by which they propose to secure the new social order. Socialism attributes what is evil in men to the evil system, and proposes to change the system that it may change the spirit. Christianity attributes what is evil in the system to the evil spirit in men, and proposes to change the spirit that it may change the system.

Let me illustrate. Our present industrial system

[1] I use the somewhat vague word socialism here in its more restricted meaning, as equivalent to State Socialism.

may be briefly described thus: The farmer gathers the raw material from the earth; the manufacturer converts it into objects which are useful to human life, — the grain into flour, the wool into clothing; the railroad man takes this material, which is of no use where it is, and carries it across the continent to those regions where it is needed, from the overfed West to the underfed cities of the Atlantic border; the middleman takes what is transported and carries it to our houses; the banker regulates the money through which all this mysterious and intricate system of interchange is carried on; the lawyer determines for us what are the principles of justice by which we are to be governed in our dealings one with another in this intricate system; the doctor cures us when we are sick, or, if we are wise and he is wise also, keeps us from getting sick; the teacher gathers out from all the experience of the past that which shall launch us into life with something of the wisdom acquired by our forefathers; and the preacher seeks to give the life and love of God to men to inspire them in all their labor.

Socialism proposes to change this system. It proposes that the community shall constitute one great corporation, in which every individual shall be a stockholder, that in the constitution of the corporation all the stockholders shall have equal authority, that the corporation shall own all the tools and implements of industry, including the land and all instruments of transportation, and

that it shall assign to every man his task according to his ability, and to every man his reward according to his need. Christianity proposes to change the spirit and motives of the men who are carrying it on. The message of Christianity might be epitomized somewhat as follows: Permit this industrial system to go on upon the principle that every man is to get what he can and keep what he gets; let competition be the law of industry; let the farmer say, "I will see how much I can get for my grain," and the manufacturer say, "I will see how much I can get for my manufacturing," and the railroad man say, "I will see what the transportation will bear," and the middleman say, "I will take all the transporter leaves before I hand anything over to the private individual," and the doctor say, "I will get all out of the sick man that he thinks his life is worth," and the lawyer say, "I will not leave this estate until I have got the most of it into my pocket," and the teachers combine to make the school subservient to their interests, and the preacher seek the parish that will give him the largest salary and the least work, — and the results will be oppression of the poor, degradation of the rich, misery of all. And if this spirit of selfishness is left dominant in men, no change in the system will be of any great benefit. To take the control of all the industries from private enterprise and give them all to the State will only be to substitute political autocracy for industrial autocracy; it will abolish Mr. Car-

negie and enthrone Mr. Croker. But, on the contrary, we may safely leave the industrial system unchanged if we can put a new spirit into it. Let the farmer say: "Thank God, I live in a time when seven men can feed a thousand, and I will see how many hungry mouths I can supply." Let the manufacturer say: "I am a worker together with God, for I also am a creator; I am building for the world." Let the railroad man say: "If it were not for me the East would be famine-stricken; I will make haste in transporting food that I may feed the hungry." Let the middleman say: "What can I do for my companions?" Let the employer say: "What are the largest wages I can pay my workingmen and live?" Let the workingman say: "What is the best service I can render and still maintain life at its full flood tide?" Let the lawyer say: "I am a minister of justice, and God is just." Let the doctor say: "I am following the footsteps of Christ, who healed the sick." Let the minister say: "I do not ask for an easy pulpit, or a rich parish; put me where I can bring life to the hearts of men." Then all the industrial system will be a part of the kingdom of God, and whatever changes in the organism are necessary will follow as of course and without revolution.

The Christian minister need not — I have indicated this before — be a sociologist. He need not be an expert on the subject of business methods. And if he is not an expert he had better not

attempt to discuss those methods in detail before a congregation which has in it a considerable number of experts. He need not be able to draw a clear line of demarkation between legitimate and illegitimate competition, to tell when speculation ceases to be speculation and becomes gambling, to know himself or to teach others what are the legitimate rules of a labor union, or what the propriety of an employers' association, or what wages the employer should pay, or what hours the employee should be willing to labor. The more he knows on these subjects the better, provided he does not think a little knowledge is equivalent to full knowledge, or forget that sometimes a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. But there are certain fundamental principles of social order which Christ has inculcated, and which the Christian minister ought to understand, and he ought to know how to apply them to the social problems of his own time and his own community. They are such as the dignity of labor: "My father worketh hitherto and I work;" the measure of greatness: "Whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant;" the standard of values: "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment;" the method of settling controversies: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, then thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in

the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established: " that is, first conciliation, then arbitration.[1] For the office of the Christian minister is not merely or even mainly to save from a general wreck a few elect individuals, transformed by the renewing of their spirit into fitness for a celestial state; it is to do his part in preparing, by the renewing of its spirit, a kingdom of industry on the earth, that shall be a kingdom of mutuality of service, of the ministry of things to life, and of peace and good-will.

IV. Atonement is individual and personal. Each soul must be brought into harmony with God. But atonement is more than individual and personal; it is organic, it is corporate. In that unity of the individual soul with God is the secret of the unity of the human race in itself.

" God was in Christ," says Paul, " reconciling the world unto himself," [2] — not merely individuals in the world; and because he was reconciling the world unto himself, he was reconciling all parts of the world to one another. The secret of social unity is the recognition of God's fatherhood, and of Christ's redeeming work in the world.

There is a brotherhood which depends upon agreement in opinion. The Republicans are brothers, because they agree upon one platform; the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the Episco-

[1] Matt. vi, 25, xviii, 15, 16, xx, 27, John v, 17.
[2] 2 Cor. v, 19.

palians are each a brotherhood, because the members of these denominations hold each to the same creed. But the brotherhood that Christ spoke of was broader than an intellectual brotherhood, for he told men that the Good Samaritan, who was a heretic, was more brother to the man who fell among thieves than the priest and Levite, who were orthodox. There is a brotherhood that depends on social congeniality. The man whose temperament agrees with my temperament, the man who thinks not only as I think, but feels as I feel, whose tastes and inclinations are like mine, is recognized as my brother. But the brotherhood of Christ was broader than that. The Pharisees would never have found fault with Christ if he had simply preached to the publicans and sinners; but he sat down and ate with them; he treated them as brothers, and that the Pharisees could not understand. There is a brotherhood of race. In vain do politicians and journals cry out against it. Still, it remains true that Englishmen will recognize in us, and we should recognize in Englishmen, kin across the sea, because we have one blood pulsating in our veins. But the brotherhood of Christ was broader than the brotherhood of blood relationship. In his first sermon he was mobbed because he told the Jews that the Syro-Phœnician woman and the Syrian man were children of the same God and their own kin.[1] Christ has told us what

[1] Luke iv, 25–27.

is the secret of the unity of the human race; it is that we are all the offspring of God.

> Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ.[1]

In this country we have seen the peril of two great chasms that seem to be growing, one between the black race and the white race in the South, the other between the laborer and the capitalist in the North, — the race rift and the class rift. How shall we close these rifts? How shall we prevent the evils that will come from them? We have tried the experiment of universal suffrage. We have said that we would give the ballot to all men, — black and white, foreigner and native American, — and then we shall have a brotherhood. We gave them the same political power, but this did not give us brotherhood. We tried a similar method of dealing with the class division. We have said: Let every man work where he will, for what wages he can get, and let every capitalist employ whom he will, for as low wages as he can pay, and we shall have brotherhood. What has happened? The capitalists have organized, and the trade unions have organized for greater success in their conflicts with each other, until the peril of industrial war is so great that both sides are appalled at the possible danger,

[1] Matt. xxiii, 8–10.

and are trying to see if they can adjust their antagonisms through some courts of arbitration. There is no unity for the human race outside of these two faiths, — faith in God as the Father of humanity, and faith in redemption as the end of human history. It is the business of the Christian Church to bridge the chasm between black and white, between native American and foreigner, between labor and capital, not by a new form or method of social, political, or industrial organization, but by infusing into the hearts of men this twofold faith, — faith in the fatherhood of God, and faith in the redeeming work to be carried on by his children on the earth.

"Our Father" — who may say that? Whoever needs a father; whoever has sorrows that are calling for comfort or sins that call for pardon. And whoever, having sorrows that need comfort, or sins that need pardon, or ignorance that needs illumination, or weakness that needs strengthening, kneels and says, "Our Father," is a brother to me, though he may kneel to a crucifix, though he may acknowledge a false creed, though he may use poor words, though he may not understand the God he addresses, and though he may call him by the wrong name. We are of one Father; therefore we are brethren.

And we are here for one work in the world; we are here to build up the kingdom of God, not merely to save men from the kingdom of the devil

and to prepare them for the kingdom of God in a future life. If that were all, then laymen could employ ministers to do this work, and they could go on with their secular affairs. But that is not what we are here for. We are here to build the kingdom of God. Ministers can sketch on paper the outline of the edifice, but the laymen build it. Ministers often fail to realize this. It is easier to draw a picture of a house than to build it with brick and stone and mortar. With a composing-stick in hand and the type before you, you can pick out the single letters and spell the word "brotherhood," and print it and send it out into the world. It is only a moment's work. But it is a very difficult task for the head of a factory, with a Pole, an Irishman, an African, an Hungarian, and a Russian Jew before him as movable type, to spell out a living "brotherhood." Yet that is what the laymen have to do, — out of these very elements to make a human brotherhood that is itself the kingdom of God on the earth; and they cannot do it save as we in the Christian ministry make the men before us realize that they are in the world not to build railroads or factories or steamship lines, but, through factories and railroads and steamship lines, to redeem the world here and now, and make a human brotherhood out of these heterogeneous social elements. The unity of the race or the nation can come only from unity in fundamental faith, — the recognition of "Our Father,"

— and unity in motive, — the recognition that our work in the world is the world's redemption. The men of the South must realize that their work is to educate and elevate the African race; the educated and employing class in the North must realize that their work is to educate and elevate the uneducated foreigners. Only in this realization can there be a true at-one-ment, — a unity of men with one another, because a unity of men with Christ in his work.

V. Sacrifice is personal. Christ suffered and died once for all, for the sins of the whole world. But sacrifice is also generic and corporate and continuous. I will not enter here into the debated question whether we are to say that Christ died on our behalf, or that Christ died in our stead; but his death is idle for us unless we die with him, and his crucifixion is ineffective for us unless we also are crucified with him. This truth is written throughout the Gospels; it is written throughout the Pauline writings. The Roman Catholics are right in their statement that the sacrifice is a continuous sacrifice; they are wrong in thinking that this continuous sacrifice is or can be offered by means of consecrated bread and wine upon the altar. It is a sacrifice in the home, in the store, in the shop, — a sacrifice day by day, by every man for his fellow men.

There are two conceptions of life. One is that we are in the world to produce a type of humanity.

Hence struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. Therefore let the strong man keep his strength, and the wealthy man his wealth, and the great man his greatness; the quicker the weak and the poor die, the quicker the end will be reached and the type will be attained. The other conception is that God in this world is working out, not a type of man, — he has given us the type in Jesus Christ, — but a race of men that are to conform to that type; and the only way the race can be wrought out in human history is by the strong bearing the burdens of the weak, and the wise bearing the burdens of the ignorant, and the rich bearing the burdens of the poor.

The first conception does not even give us a type. Who reverences the self-seeking politician or merchant or doctor or minister? We have to hide our self-seeking if we want to be honored. On the other hand, how can life make a brave man if he does not face danger, or a patient man if he does not bear burdens? How can life make a true man if he does not suffer for the sake of his brother man? Only as this Anglo-Saxon people are willing to put themselves underneath the African race and lift it up, and underneath the Pole and the Hungarian, and the Italian and the Russian, and lift them up; only as they are willing to lay down their lives that other men may walk up the incline to a higher life, will or can the world be saved.

The Christian minister has then a social no less

than a personal message. His aim is not merely the salvation of souls, it is the salvation of society. His theme is the kingdom of God as it was the theme of his Master. And in some sense this social message is peculiarly required in our age and our country. If this social gospel is not his preëminent theme above all other themes, this age is preëminent above all other ages in its call for this message.

Into the United States God has poured a vast heterogeneous population. The picture which John painted in the Apocalypse may be seen here, with a difference; men gathered out of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, but not before the throne of God, nor praising him. Every phase of individual character is here represented; every race, every nationality, every language, every form of religion. Here are the Irishman, the Englishman, the Frenchman, the Swede, the Norwegian, the German, the Hungarian, the Pole, the Italian, the Spaniard, the Portuguese. Here are the Celt, the Anglo-Saxon, the African, the Malay. Here is the negro, with his emotional religion; the Roman Catholic, with his ceremonial religion; the Puritan, with his intellectual religion, and the unbelieving German, with his no religion at all. Hither they have come trooping, sometimes beckoned by us, sometimes thrust upon us, sometimes invading us; but welcome or unwelcome, still they come. To America the language of the ancient Hebrew prophet may be almost literally applied:

> The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls,
> And their kings shall minister unto thee;
> . . . . . .
> Thy gates also shall be open continually;
> They shall not be shut day nor night;
> That men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles,
> And that their kings may be brought.[1]

This heterogeneous people occupy a land which embraces every variety of climate from northern Europe to middle Asia, and every variety of wealth from the wheatfields of Russia to the gold mines of Australia. Its fertile soil gives every variety of production, from the pine-trees of Maine to the orange groves of Florida. It has for agriculture vast prairies of exhaustless wealth; for mines, mountains rich in coal, iron, copper, silver, gold; for mills, swift running rivers; for carriage, slow and deep ones; and for commerce, a harbor-indented coast-line lying open to two oceans and inviting the commerce of both hemispheres. I do not dwell upon the magnificence of this endowment, — that is a familiar aspect, — but upon its diversity. The nation which occupies such a land must be diverse in industry as it is heterogeneous in population. The simplicity of social and industrial organization has long since passed away. There are few richer men in the world than in America, and none who have amassed such wealth in so short a time; there are no poorer men in the world, and nowhere men

[1] Isaiah lx, 10, 11. The whole chapter applies in a remarkable manner to the present condition of the United States.

whose poverty is so embittered by disappointed hopes and shattered ambitions. In the Old World men are born to poverty, and accept their predestined lot with contentment, if not with cheerfulness. In America the ambitious youth sees a possible preferment in the future; counts every advance only a step toward further advancement, and attributes every failure to injustice or ill luck. Society, thus made up of heterogeneous population, subjected to the educational influence of widely differing religions, engaged in industries whose interests often seem to conflict, if they actually do not, and separated into classes by continually shifting partition walls, is kept in perpetual ferment by the nature of its educational, political, and social institutions. The boys of the rich and the poor sit by each other's side in the same schoolroom; their fathers brush against each other in the same conveyance. The hod-carrier and the millionaire hang by the same strap, and sway against each other in the same street-car. Every election brings rich and poor, cultivated and ignorant, into line to deposit ballots of equal weight in the same ballot box, and make it the interest of each to win the suffrage of the other for his candidate and his party. The caldron, political, social, and industrial, is always boiling; the bottom thrown to the top, the top sinking in turn to the bottom. The canal-boat driver becomes President; the deck-hand a railroad magnate. The son of the President mingles

with the masses of the people in the battle for position and preferment, and the son of yesterday's millionaire is to-morrow earning his daily bread by the sweat of his brow. In the Old World men live like monks in a monastery; each class, if not each individual, has its own cell. Here all walls are down, and all classes live in common. All this is familiar; it is enough here to sketch it in the barest outlines; for my only purpose in recalling it is to ask the reader to consider what is its moral meaning. It can have but one. Into this continent God has thrown this heterogeneous people, in this effervescent and seething mass, that in the struggle they may learn the laws of social life. African, Malay, Anglo-Saxon, and Celt, ignorant and cultivated, rich and poor, — he flings us together under institutions which inextricably intermix us, that he may teach us by experience the meaning of the brotherhood of man.

Our national history confirms this interpretation — if any confirmation were needed. The questions of our national history have all been social, not theological. We can hardly conceive that battles were fought, as bitter as our civil war, over the question whether God should be defined as existing in one Person or in three; whether the Son should be defined as proceeding from the Father or created by him; whether he should be described as of the same substance or only as of like substance. We can hardly conceive that Europe was plunged into

fierce wars by the question whether righteousness was imputed or imparted. But these were the real questions of the past; if they seem insignificant to us now, it is only because we do not look beneath the form to the substance of the issues involved, — issues as sublime as ever demanded the supremest consideration and the most devoted zeal of men. For these questions men once willingly died; for them they now unwillingly keep awake for half an hour of a Sunday afternoon. The questions for which we have fought, and are willing to fight again if need be, are questions of a different sort. Slavery, temperance, labor and capital, the tariff, public education: these present the questions of our national life, and they are all aspects and phases of one question, — What are the divine laws of social life? Are there any principles of government, known or discoverable, which will enable men who differ in origin, in condition, in race, and in religious belief, to live harmoniously together in one commonwealth, — that is, in one social and political organization, so fashioned and carried on as to promote their common welfare?

This question the clergy and the Church must help to answer. It is emphatically a religious question.[1] If the Church does not interest itself in what concerns humanity, it cannot hope that humanity will interest itself in what concerns the Church.

[1] "Every political question is rapidly becoming a social question, and every social question a religious question." — Mazzini.

Why, indeed, should it? If the Church shelters itself under the plea that religion is a matter between the individual soul and God, it adopts a very much narrower definition of religion than that of the Bible. The Hebrew prophet who asked, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" [1] had a conception of religion two parts of which have to do with our relations to our fellow men, and one part to our relations with God. Christ's summary of the law and the prophets puts as much emphasis on the brotherhood of man as on the fatherhood of God. Indeed, it could not be otherwise. A religion which did not teach us how to live on earth would have small claims upon our respect when it claimed to teach us how to prepare for heaven. A captain who does not know how to manage a ship at sea cannot be trusted to bring her into port. A teacher who cannot tell his boys how to get along with one another in school is not the man to prepare them to get along with one another as men in manhood.

To whom else shall the people look for instruction in the moral principles of a true social order if not to the ministry? Shall they look to the politicians? Their function in a democracy is not to inculcate, still less to discover, great principles. They are executive officers, not teachers. They are appointed to formulate in law and so make effective

[1] Micah vi, 8.

the principles which, under the instruction of others, the people have adopted. This is what more or less effectively they are doing; and this is what they ought to do. The politician is not a motive power; he is a belting, and connects the motive power with the machinery. He gets things done when the people have determined what they want done. The bankers and financiers deliberate and discuss, and when the popular determination as to the currency is reached as the result of this discussion, Congress incorporates it in a law. The politicians will never determine what is the best legal method of dealing with the liquor traffic. When the people have determined, the politicians may be trusted to carry that determination into effect. The people cannot learn the moral laws of the social order from the politicians; the politicians must learn them from the people. The master does not take orders from his servant; the servant takes them from his master. Shall we then look to the editors for moral instruction in sociology? The editors ought to be public teachers, but with few exceptions they have abdicated. The secular press is devoted to secular news-gathering and to party service; the religious press to ecclesiastical news-gathering and denominational service. There are some notable exceptions, but they only prove the rule. Not long since I heard one of the editors of one of the wealthiest and most successful, though not most influential, of American journals say in a public debate that the daily paper

was organized to make money, and that was what it ought to be organized for. So long as this is deemed true by the editors, the newspaper cannot be a teacher. The world has never paid for leadership until the leader was dead. Such a press can only crystallize the public sentiment which others have created, and so make efficacious a feeling which otherwise would effervesce in emotion. This it does, and for this service we are duly grateful. But it cannot — at least it generally does not — do the work of an investigator. It does not discover laws of life. It does not create; it only represents. It is a reservoir, without which the mill could not be driven; but the reservoir must itself be fed by the springs among the hills.

The real formers of public opinion are the teachers and the preachers, the schools and the churches. The teachers are necessarily empirical; they deduce the laws of life from a study of past experience. The preachers ought to be prophets. Their sympathy with all classes of men, their common contact with rich and poor, their opportunities for reflection and meditation, and their supposed consecration to a work wholly unselfish and disinterested, ought to combine with their piety to give them that insight into life which has always been characteristic of a prophetic order. I do not mean to demand of the ministry the impossible; but if this is not their function, it would be difficult to say what function they have. They cannot formulate public opinion

in laws as well as the politicians; they cannot represent that public opinion as well as the journalists; they cannot extract the truth from a scientific study of life as well as the teacher and the scholar. But so far as natural selection, aided by special studies and a generally quiet life, can equip any class of men for a prophetic function, and so fit them to discern the great moral laws of the social order, the ministry are so equipped. If they will leave the professional teachers to expound the secular, that is, the empirical side of social science, the newspapers to reflect such conclusions as are reached respecting social science, and the politicians to embody those opinions and principles in law, and will devote themselves to the spiritual study of the Book and of life, they can be leaders of the leaders. They can lay the foundations on which other men shall rear the superstructure. They speak, or can speak, to all classes in the community, for they belong to none. They address audiences of personal friends, whom they have counseled and aided in the hours when friendship is the most full of sweet significance. They speak to these friends at a time when baser passions are allayed and loyal sentiments are awakened. The very smallness of their auditory as compared with that of the journalist adds force to their counsels and affords protection from misapprehension.

The pulpit for to-day, then, must be competent to give instruction in the moral laws which govern

social and industrial life, — the organized life of humanity. The age requires this instruction; the people desire it; the ministers should give it. If the minister will go to his Book for this purpose, he will find it quite as rich in sociological as in theological instruction; quite as fertile in its suggestions respecting the duty of man to man as in its suggestions respecting the nature and government of God. He will find his New Testament telling him that in Christ's kingdom the strong are to serve the weak; the rich, the poor; — that is, the factory owner is to serve his hands, the railroad prince, his trainmen; that controversies are to be settled not by wage of battle or its modern equivalent, strikes and lockouts, but by mutual concessions and ultimate appeal to an impartial tribunal, — in other words, by conciliation and arbitration; that the State is not a "social compact," nor government a "necessary evil;" that the one is a divinely constituted organism, and the other a necessary condition of its existence; that the judicial function does not belong to humanity, and therefore the judicial system will never become truly Christian till it ceases to be an effort to administer justice and becomes an effort to administer mercy; that the brotherhood of man is an integral part of Christianity no less than the Fatherhood of God, and that to deny the one is no less infidel than to deny the other. In short, while he will find in the Book which he is appointed to interpret no light upon

scientific details of political or industrial organization, he will find the great moral laws of the social order, if not clearly revealed, at least definitely indicated, and in them abundant material for sermons which will be interesting because giving instruction which is both imperatively needed and eagerly desired. Sir Henry Maine [1] has shown very clearly that democracy is not yet "triumphant democracy;" it is still an experiment. The American Revolution determined our right to try it on this continent without fear of foreign intervention; a civil war determined our right to try it without fear of domestic disruption. We have still to work the problem out. Whether a people diverse in race, religion, and industry can live happily and prosperously together, with no other law than the invisible law of right and wrong and with no other authority than the unarmed authority of conscience, is the question which America has to solve for the world. No one class in the community has a more potent influence in determining what shall be its answer to that question than the American clergy.

[1] Henry Sumner Maine: *Popular Government*, Essay II, on "The Nature of Democracy."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MINISTER AS PRIEST

The duties of religious ministry in Old Testament time were discharged by two classes of ministers, — priests and prophets. The priest conducted public worship, the prophet furnished religious instruction: rarely was the same man both priest and prophet. It is true that the priest sometimes furnished religious instruction, and the prophets sometimes accompanied their prophesyings with music, which may have been a kind of public worship; but, speaking broadly, the conducting of public worship was carried on by the priests, and religious instruction and inspiration were furnished by the prophets.

The object of religious worship is the expression of an existing religious life; the object of religious instruction is the impartation of such life. In our time these two functions are generally united in one service. By the expression of religious life we help to promote it; in promoting religious life we necessarily give expression to it. But they may be, and in point of fact they often are, differentiated. Sometimes public worship is without any public instruction. In most of the cathedrals of Spain, and in many of those in Italy, there are small

facilities for public instruction. There is no pulpit; there are no seats for a congregation; and in point of fact in many of the larger churches in those countries no public instruction is given except during the Lenten season. Thus there is religious worship without any instruction. On the other hand, there may be religious instruction without any worship. There is no indication that there was any public worship connected with the Sermon on the Mount; it is certain that there was no public worship in connection with Paul's sermon at Athens. There is held every winter in New York, in Cooper Union, on Sunday evenings, a series of public religious addresses. Jew and Christian, Protestant and Roman Catholic, Churchman and Anarchist, combine to fill Cooper Union Hall fairly full; and under these circumstances those who arrange for these meetings think it not wise to have any religious services. There is no reading of the Scriptures, no prayer, no singing of hymns; there is simply a religious lecture. And the heterogeneous congregation of non-church-goers assembled and the attention they give to the more serious discourses justify the method pursued.

There is no essential reason why any minister might not in his church maintain this distinction, and have sometimes a service without any instruction, and sometimes instruction without any service. Whether this would be wise or not would depend upon the condition of the homes in the village or

town where the church is situated. Ordinarily the instruction and the worship are better commingled; each is better for being connected with the other; the service is more real and rational if connected with instruction; the instruction is more spiritual and vital if connected with some public worship. But there is no essential impropriety in having either without the other.

It is true the best expression of our religious life is in our conduct, in what we do, not in what we say. It is also true that the expression of our religious life which is personal and individual is more important than that which is public and common. "When thou prayest," says Christ, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."[1] But those of us who have a common religious life, — a reverence for God, a hope in God, a responsiveness toward God, a comfort in God, a love for God, will inevitably desire to come together and find some common expression for these common experiences. This is public worship. The most important way in which a boy can express his love for his father is by obedience to his commands. If he does not show it in that way, all the other ways are of little value. The most sacred hour of the week for him is the hour when he sits down alone with his father or his mother, and these two talk together

[1] Matt. vi, 6.

confidentially with no one to hear, and speak almost in whispers, as though they would not even allow their own ears to hear their own words. But still the home would be very imperfect were there not some hours in which the whole family gather together and interchange their thought and their feeling, so that their lives flow in one commingled stream. What these hours of human fellowship in the family are to the home life, the hours of worship are to the church life. They are of vital importance. The minister makes a very great mistake, in my judgment a fatal mistake, if he thinks his chief function is to be a preacher of sermons. Certainly not less important is his function to inspire, direct, and conduct the worship of a worshiping people. To do this he has in all Protestant churches three instrumentalities, — the distinctively devotional meeting, the Lord's Supper, and the public worship in the regular Sunday service.

I. Every church ought to have some meeting or meetings primarily if not exclusively for the expression of its devotional life. They may be liturgical or non-liturgical or a combination of the liturgical and non-liturgical; they may be intermingled with instruction or exhortation or both, or they may be exclusively devotional; what is essential is that their primary object should be, not a teaching of truth, not an appeal to the emotions or the will, but an expression of the already existing life of penitence and consecration and praise. And if the

meeting is devoted to that object, and that object exclusively, it will necessarily be attractive only to those who possess or desire to possess such spiritual life, and to share the expression of it with others. In other words, only those will be attracted to the purely devotional meeting who are both social and spiritual, or perhaps I should say who are socially spiritual.

The descendants of the Puritans have made a great mistake in measuring devotional meetings by quantity, not by quality. I confess to that mistake myself. In my earlier ministry I measured the spirituality of my church by the size of the prayer-meeting. If I went back into the ministry, I should not apply that measure. I should not try to make the prayer-meeting large, and should not be discouraged because it was small; I should not urge the people to attend it from sense of duty, nor try to draw them to it by purely social attractions. I should wish to get together on certain occasions those members of the church who had a spiritual life to which they wished to give expression in common with other members of the church, and only those. If there were three, I would begin with three; if thirty, I should be glad of the thirty. If twenty more should come in who had no spiritual life, who did not care for the prayer-meeting, and to whom the prayer-meeting meant nothing, I should wish them to stay away. I should not wish a foreign element in a meeting the object of which is

not to impart religious life to others but to express religious life by a common devotion.

A man may be a very good man, he may be a profoundly religious man, and not be interested in a purely devotional meeting. His religious life may find its expression in his daily acts and in private devotions. The devotional meeting of the church may be liturgical, and the liturgy may fail to afford the expression which fits his temperament; or it may be non-liturgical, and his critical temper may make it impossible for him to preserve a devotional spirit in spite of the infelicities of expression in the extemporaneous prayers. No man has any right to set up his own method of expression of spiritual life as a standard and then measure all men by that standard. Neither the Roman Catholic nor the Episcopal Church has what is ordinarily designated by the term prayer-meeting. Yet both have developed high types of devotional life. Nor is it true that the prayer-meeting is the thermometer of the Church, if by that phrase is meant that the spiritual life of the Church is to be measured by the size of the prayer-meeting. The true measure of the Church is the efficiency of its active service. Christ has given to his disciples the true measuring rod: "By their fruits ye shall know them."[1]

The difference between the meeting for spiritual expression and the meeting for public instruction is very clearly indicated by certain contrasts in the

[1] Matt. vii, 20.

New Testament. The Sermon on the Mount was delivered to a great concourse. It is an address for the impartation of religious instruction. The conversation of Christ, in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John, was an expression of spiritual life to those who were already in sympathy with the Master. All others were excluded: Christ did not begin that conversation with them until the traitor had gone out. Even more striking is the contrast between what we call the Lord's Prayer and the prayer which Christ offered just before his Passion, as it is reported in the seventeenth chapter of John. The Lord's Prayer expresses the common wishes of unspiritual humanity, — for daily bread, forgiveness of sin, guidance, deliverance from temptation. But when Christ comes to offer prayer in the innermost circle of his own disciples, he says nothing about daily bread, — he assumes his Father's care for his own; he says nothing about forgiveness of sins, — he assumes that these men have been forgiven; he does not ask that they shall not be led into temptation. The only petition that is in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew and also in the Lord's prayer in the seventeenth chapter of John, is the prayer for deliverance from evil. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the Evil One." And then follows prayer for fellowship with the Father and fellowship with Jesus Christ his Son, which will make them one with God as the Father

and the Son are one with each other. One is a prayer of Christ and for those who are already in fellowship with him; the other voices the common aspirations of universal humanity.

Public worship may, and in some sense does, both express and develop the dormant reverence in the community, so that the life of men who never attend worship is modified in its spiritual quality from the mere fact that they dwell in a community where worshipers dwell and public worship is carried on. Thus the atmosphere of a college where a wholly voluntary chapel service is maintained, which is attended by only a minority of the students, is different from one which is without any devotional exercises of any description. It is also true that public worship often enkindles spiritual life in those who chance to attend it, without previously sharing in that life. For both reasons weekly meetings wholly devotional in their character may be advantageously maintained, to which the undevotional may be not only welcomed but invited or even urged. It is also true that weekly meetings may well be held in the church for other than purely devotional purposes. The pastor may maintain a weekly lecture, or a weekly Bible class, or a meeting to arouse missionary enthusiasm, or one for purely social fellowship; or he may combine two or more of these objects in one meeting, and that meeting may be held on the same evening with a purely devotional meeting, either preceding

or following it. But he makes a mistake if he allows any meeting to take the place of one purely devotional in its character; or if he attempts by extraneous attractions to draw the unspiritual into the devotional meeting, or by appeals to a sense of duty to coerce them into it. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," says Christ.[1] A fourth who has not come in Christ's name does not add to but detracts from the spiritual value of such a gathering.

II. The Lord's Supper is a memorial service. "This do in remembrance of me," [2] is a request rather than a command. Christ wished to be remembered. One thing and only one does he ask us to do for himself; he says, Do not forget me. And that you do not forget me, now and again meet together and take this bread and this wine in memory of me. The one thing that we can do for Christ that is not for the service of some one else is our participation in the Lord's Supper.

But the Lord's Supper is something more than a memorial. It is an occasion wherein we may especially feel, if we will, the companionship of our Lord. He who believes that the benefit of Christ's presence is purely through a spiritual inspiration, not through any material or mechanical medium, cannot accept the doctrine of transubstantiation, that is, the doctrine that at the moment of con-

[1] Matt. xviii, 20. [2] Luke xxii, 19.

secration the bread and wine are changed into the "body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord." He who believes that Christ is really present whenever two or three are gathered together in his name, cannot believe that he is any more really present in the Lord's Supper than in any other truly devotional meeting. But we may well believe that the Lord's Supper affords an occasion wherein those who participate in it may especially realize, if they will, the companionship of their Lord. For this sacred half hour, not merely our pleasures and cares and customary vocations are removed from our thoughts, but also our daily duties and responsibilities. Our whole attention is concentrated on companionship with our Master and our Friend. We come to this service in a receptive mood of mind. Our thoughts are directed not to what we should do, or what we should think, or what we are, they are not even directed to what we need; they are directed away from ourselves altogether to Another. The service is one of self-forgetfulness because it is a service of love-remembrance. The meal is itself a symbol of the fellowship which it both expresses and cultivates. We do not know a family until we have taken a meal with them; but when we have sat down to the same table with them, in eating together we come into their family life. The Lord's Supper we eat with him, and so enter into fellowship with him. This makes it a Lord's Supper. It is therefore a Eucharist, a thanksgiving. We ought

not to meet for the Lord's Supper with streaming eyes and heavy hearts, but with thankfulness and gladness in him. This should be a feast, not a funeral. And it is a Communion, in which we are brought close to one another because we are brought close to him, and the ecclesiastical and theological and philosophical and temperamental differences for a little time disappear.

For the same reason that our devotional meetings should be so arranged that they may be the gathering only of those who are devout of spirit, the Lord's Supper should be frequently, if not generally, so arranged as to be a private meeting of loyal disciples, as the first Lord's Supper was. This may be done by an early communion, as in the Episcopal Church, or by a special celebration in the afternoon, which was the custom in the New England churches in my boyhood. If it comes at the close of the morning service, it should be separated from that service, and there should be an opportunity left for those to withdraw who are not intending to partake of the communion, that it may be a real communion of those who are already attached to Christ and desire personal, spiritual, and intimate fellowship with him. It is hardly wise to put our Sermon on the Mount and our fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John within the same hour; if we do, we should certainly leave a little interim between them.

III. The third instrumentality for the expression

of devotional life in the church is the public worship as a part of the regular Sunday service.

If the Roman Catholics and the Episcopalians have made relatively too much of the service and too little of the sermon, the Puritans and their descendants have made too much of the sermon and too little of the service. In my boyhood days this used to be called "preliminary exercises," and still is sometimes so called, as though it were a kind of grace before meat — short grace, long meat; for we come to the table, not for the grace, but for the food.

The evils of this relegation of the worship to a secondary place are many and great. The minister gives it scant attention, devotes the week to his sermon, selects his Scripture reading and his hymns after he comes into the pulpit, and offers prayers which fail to hold the thought of the people because the minister has put no thought upon them beforehand. The choir leader catches the spirit of the minister, and treats the music as a kind of sacred concert — not always very sacred — which precedes the sermon, as the music of the orchestra precedes the play, or as an æsthetic device to get the people to church, as though to get a careless people inside a sacred edifice were the end and aim of a religious service. The people catch the spirit of minister and choir, and think they are in abundant time if they are in their places before the sermon, or take a back seat and slip out as soon as

the music which has attracted them is over. And, deeper than all, minister, choir master, and people are trained to think of the worship of Almighty God as a mere incidental frame-work to a literary composition, a portico to the sermon, which is the real temple, with a consequent worship of the preacher in lieu of the worship of God, and the expectation of entertainment from choir and preacher alike, in lieu of serious thought, glad praise, solemn penitence, and renewed consecration. Nor shall we banish this fundamental irreverence from our Puritan churches, until we realize the truth that public worship is at least as important as public instruction, and ought to be as highly esteemed, and deserves and requires as sincere and serious consideration.

Three elements enter into this public worship; the reading of Scripture, the singing of hymns, the prayer.

The reading of Scripture may be for devotional purposes or for instructional purposes; that is, it may be to teach the people something, or to express their devotional life. And these two are quite distinct, and must be kept distinct in mind, though the two may be intermingled in actual practice. The advantage of the responsive reading of the Psalms is that no one can think it is for instructional purposes; it carries with it necessarily the idea that it is devotional, not educational. But if the minister would read the Scripture so as to

make it an instrument for the expression of devotion, the Scripture must first enter into his own soul. "The words that I speak unto you," says Christ, "they are spirit and they are life." [1] The words of Scripture will not be spirit, and they will not be life to the congregation, unless they have entered into the spirit and life of the reader. He must know not only how to read so that his congregation can hear, but he must know how to read so that his congregation will feel. I am not urging elocutionary reading, still less dramatic reading, least of all, theatric reading; I am urging spiritual reading.

The musical service ought to be distinctly an expression of spiritual life. It is not always; we might say, it often is not. We ministers find fault with our choirs, that they are ill-behaved during the sermon; the choirs would often have a right to find fault with the ministers, that they are ill-behaved during the singing. We take the time of song to look over our congregation and see who are present; to consider whether the house is too warm or too cold and call the sexton to set it right; to examine our notices and consider how we can most effectively announce some important meeting; or to look over the notes of the sermon and refresh our memories; in brief, to do anything but join in the praise of God. I am not indulging in wholesale denunciations of ministers; I am confessing

[1] John vi, 63.

faults not uncommon in all non-liturgical pulpits. I was present once at an ordination in the West where a home missionary, possessed perhaps of more frankness than prudence, after a long sermon and a long charge to the congregation, gave out a hymn in this way: "In order to relieve the tedium of these exercises we will sing the fifty-fifth hymn, — and also to the praise and glory of Almighty God." It was rather too candid and naïve a confession of what is really often in the minds of non-liturgical ministers. Frequently the minister selects a hymn without reading it, thinks it too long, and directs the omission of a verse quite regardless of the mutilating effect. Years ago I heard a minister announce a hymn in that way, directing us in singing to omit the second verse; what we sang was this:

> When thou, my righteous Judge, shalt come
> To take thy ransomed people home,
> Shall I among them stand ?
> . . . . . .
> O Lord, forbid it by thy grace.

I once attended a meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association in one of our colleges, where a young man selected for us to sing a baptismal hymn in which we represented ourselves as bringing our children to Christ to dedicate them to him, and I suppose I was the only married man in the room.

Some instruction in hymnology and in sacred music ought to be given and some study of both

required in all theological seminaries. It is not necessary that every minister should be a musician, but it is very desirable that he should at least have enough knowledge of music to understand its adaptability to the conditions of the service he is conducting. For an evangelistic service carried on in a hall crowded with tramps and lodging-house men, the Moody and Sankey hymns are admirable. They are adapted to the needs of the kind of people that are there gathered. But when I go to a college Young Men's Christian Association, and "Safe in the arms of Jesus" or "Hallelujah, 't is done," is given out to be sung, I know that the cultivated, educated young men of the college are certain to be repelled by any such form of expression of religious life, and I am not surprised that sometimes the men whom the service is intended to attract remain outside until the singing is over. The minister ought to know something about hymns; he ought to know something about music; and he ought to have sympathy with his choir leader. We shall yet come in the Church of Christ to the conclusion that no man can be allowed to lead the worship of God through the medium of music who is not himself devout. It is as incongruous that an undevout choir-master should lead the worship of God as that an undevout minister should lead it. And yet in many of our city churches the only question asked respecting singer or organist is, Can she sing? Can he play? As a consequence we do not get

music that is a vehicle for the carriage of a spiritual life. How can we, when there is no spiritual life in the singer to be conveyed? We get perhaps a good essay at one end of the church, and a musical performance at the other. That is not worship; and it is not religion. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."[1] I sometimes think that there is no place where that command is more violated than in some Christian churches.

The minister is also to conduct the worship of the congregation by public prayer. In this service he is preëminently their priest. Some of us have been inclined to maintain that there is no Christian priesthood; that the priesthood has forever passed away. Certain of the priestly offices have passed away. The old sacrificial system has gone. There is no more in our temples the lowing of cattle, the bleating of lambs, no more the drawn knife, the rivers of blood, no more sacrificial altars. The priest is no longer an offerer of sacrifice. It is true that the whole Roman Catholic Church, and a few even in the Protestant Church, believe that the sacrifice is a perpetual sacrifice, and must be offered Sabbath after Sabbath. I do not need to discuss the question here. I shall assume that there is no longer need of a sacrifice to be offered, or a priest to offer it. But both the priestly office and the prophetic office remain. What are they? I call a priest one whose function it is to interpret man to

[1] Exodus xx, 7.

God ; I call a prophet one whose function it is to interpret God to man : these two functions constitute the function of the Christian ministry, and they are needed to-day as much as ever they were needed.

To interpret man to God — is this needed? Has not the veil of the temple been rent? May not any one enter into the Holy of Holies? Is there needed any mediator between the individual soul and God? Is it not the fundamental doctrine of our religion that every soul can go direct to God, and no man need ask for the intervention of a sacred order? Yes, this is all true. And yet we men and women do need some one to interpret us to God, because we need some one to interpret us to ourselves. Let me try and make this clear.

What does a painter do? He sees beauty where you and I would fail to see it; then he puts the interpretation of that beauty upon the canvas, and by his painting he not only interprets nature to us, but he interprets us to ourselves. He gives us new eyes; he gives us a new sense, a new perception of beauty. We are educated, because that which was deep down in us is uncovered, revealed, opened out to us, and we see through his eyes, because he with his brush has spoken to us. We are all musicians. You cannot play a note; you cannot make a chord; you know nothing whatever about the laws of harmony. Nevertheless, you are a musician. If you were not, you would care nothing for the singing of the birds, nothing for the dance music, nothing

for the church choral — and we all like one or the other. You are a musician though you cannot compose music. The musician who creates music by his fingers or by his voice, interprets the music to you, and interprets you to yourself, — evokes the music in you, makes you hear who before could not hear, makes you realize what before you could not realize. What we cannot hear the musician hears, though there is no music played, and transcribes on the piano what he has heard with the invisible ear. You and I lack the invisible ear; but the man who plays on the piano and the woman who sings, create, the one with her voice, the other with the instrument, the hearing ear, and we are interpreted to ourselves, and find that we are musicians though we did not know it. So we are all poets, though most of us have the sense not to try to write rhymes. There is poetry in all men, and we take our Wordsworth, our Tennyson, our Browning, our Dante, our village poet it may be, and there is something in that poetry which appeals to us, evokes something we were not conscious of. Deep down below our visible self there is a hidden self, and the poet brings that out, and when he speaks, we say, "Yes, I see the beauty which I saw not before."

So we men and women, weary and worn or glad and joyous, come to our church on Sunday morning, and we do not know ourselves. This man has sinned, has thrown away his opportunities, has violated the law of love, has been selfish with his

employers, been unfaithful in his work, been cross with his wife, been unjust with his children, and he does not know it. He has what he calls "the blues." It is a little, secret, uninterpreted, unintelligible remorse, and he brings it with him to church. By his side there sits a mother. God has reached down out of heaven the arms of his love, and has taken the child from her to himself; she always thought she believed in immortality, and now for a little time she hardly knows whether her babe is living or dead. In the next pew is a young bride, full of all the joy of love, glad, joyous, thankful, and yet she does not know that she is thankful. What this sinner with his heart burdened by unconscious remorse, what this mother shadowed by a half-scepticism, what this bride full of a glad, uninterpreted joyousness desires, is some one in this pulpit to interpret themselves to themselves, and so interpret them to their God. What they want is some man who shall so say, "We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,"[1] that this man half-conscious of his guilt shall say to himself, "That is it; I have so erred;" who shall so say, "I am the resurrection and the life,"[2] that this woman who cannot see the truth for her tears shall wipe them away and say, "He is;" shall so say, "We give thanks to thee, thou Giver of every good and perfect gift," that this half-grateful bride shall say, "My love, he gave it to

[1] The Book of Common Prayer. [2] John xi, 25.

me." The minister ought to be an artist, a musician, a poet, that is, a priest. He ought to know how to interpret the unutterable experiences of men, first to themselves, and then, through that expression and interpretation, to God. This not because God is afar off, that only a few holy men can approach him; but because men, busy with the toil and care of life, have not time to think, or suppose that they have not time, and perhaps have not unaided the ability, to think themselves out, to enter into their own nature, to interpret that which is deepest and best in them. They need an interpreter. The Church ought to be a place where we come to lay all our burdens, whether of sorrow, of sin, of duty, or of joy, at the feet of our Lord. We want some man to lead us to him and speak for us, and so teach us to speak for ourselves.

If the minister is to fulfill this function of priest, if he is to interpret the people to God, first of all he must understand what is in the people. It is said of Christ that he knew what was in men. Every minister ought to know what is in men. We need to know our congregation better than they know themselves. We need to know those hidden experiences which they conceal from one another, and which they conceal from themselves. We must be able to see the soul through the eye, the trembling of the voice, the very silence; we ought to be able to penetrate their mask — not in order curiously to discern the secrets of men, but to help their needs,

on the assumption that men do not know their own deepest selves, and require some one to interpret themselves to themselves, and so to interpret them to their God.

But it is not enough for the minister to understand these deep experiences; he must learn how to carry them to God. How? By reading devotional literature? By reading prayers? By writing prayers? That has only to do with the mere mechanism, that is the mere supplementary work. No minister ever leads a congregation in public devotion who is not accustomed to go to God in private prayer with that congregation in his heart. When he knows what his people are, when he knows who they are, when he knows what secret life they hide in this masquerade that we call life, when he has been accustomed daily on his knees in his closet to carry their sorrows and burdens to his Father, — then when he comes into the church he will find the way easy, and they will find the way easy. Sometimes we come to church and our minister addresses to us an eloquent oration which he calls a prayer; sometimes he gives us a lecture on theology which he calls a prayer; sometimes he narrates the gossip of the village, which he calls a prayer; sometimes he gives instructions to the Almighty which he calls a prayer; and when he goes stumbling through a wood that he has never walked in before, the trees not even blazed, nor the underbrush taken away, we refuse to follow him,

and our thoughts go everywhither. But when he comes on Sunday bearing our burdens on his heart, because he has borne them all the week; when he comes ready to carry them to the Father now, because he has carried them to the Father all the week; when he comes walking on the highway his faith has made plain and simple for him, he has made the pathway for us, and we follow where he leads, though we can scarcely creep.

It does not come within the province of this volume to discuss the relative advantages of liturgical and non-liturgical services. I have never been able to see why the two forms of service should be regarded as mutually exclusive. Why should not the liturgical churches encourage the use of extemporaneous prayers without discontinuing the use of a noble liturgy? Why should not the non-liturgical churches encourage the use of a liturgy without abandoning the advantage afforded by extemporaneous prayers? That there are advantages in both the liturgical and the non-liturgical service appears to the unprejudiced inquirer beyond reasonable question. There are certain spiritual experiences which are constantly repeated and which may therefore well find their expression in forms constantly used. Such are the experiences of repentance and gratitude expressed in the General Confession and General Thanksgiving of the Book of Common Prayer, and the desires in which every congregation may well be expected to unite in

every Sunday service for the Nation and the Church. There is a distinct advantage in a common phraseology for the expression of these common experiences. The congregation can audibly unite in them. Even if they do not do so, they are not curious to see what new phraseology the minister will employ to express the life which he expressed in a different form last Sunday. The minister is not brought under pressure to vary the form for the expression of the same life. Awkwardness and infelicities of expression are avoided. Forgetfulness never intervenes to omit from the service those elements of spiritual experience which ought to find utterance on every occasion of public worship. The imagination is appealed to by the fact that on the same day other worshiping assemblies in this and other lands are speaking to the Father of the same experience and in the same words. This unity of expression both emphasizes and promotes that unity of life which is the root out of which alone true church unity can grow. And the fact that the same life has found the same expression through many centuries of Christian experience preserves an historic unity because it affords a living demonstration that the life of God in the soul of man is essentially the same despite all changes of theological and ecclesiastical organization. Finally, a catholic Church (and every Christian Church should seek to be a catholic Church) ought to aim to provide in its service for men of

every temperament; and in our Puritan congregations there are apparently an increasing number who share the opinion which Dr. Rainsford has so well expressed in his autobiography:

> I cannot conceive of any man, whose religious life is earnest, who does not find himself more comforted and uplifted by the use of written prayers, especially when he has a collection of the best prayers of the ages. Personally I find more rest to the soul and more ease of worship in following along lines which we know perfectly well and which help me to express what I feel. To the educated spiritual consciousness I do not believe there is any special appeal in variety of extemporaneous prayers. If all men prayed always as some men pray sometimes, then we might do away with the Liturgy; but they do not.[1]

On the other hand there are great advantages in extemporaneous prayer. There frequently occur in the parish experiences for which no liturgy can possibly afford adequate expression and which in a Church shut up to a liturgy remain unexpressed. This truth is recognized by some of the wisest and most devoted adherents of a liturgical service. Says Cannon Liddon:

> Although as a general rule it is wise in praying with the sick and poor to use only the Church's words, there are occasions when extempore prayer becomes a matter of necessity. It is impossible, or almost so, that the research of the parish priest should have been able to anticipate every variety of mental and moral weakness by his selec-

[1] William S. Rainsford: *A Preacher's Story of His Work*, p. 146.

tions from the copious stores of antiquity; and the risk of using general language when there is need of pointed applicability to a particular case is very great. A soul must be led to God, not under cover of a general formula, but, as she is, in His Presence.[1]

It is not only with the sick and poor that extempore prayer becomes a necessity. The devout minister who is accustomed to study, not merely the social and ethical conditions of his parish, but its spiritual life, and to carry the needs of that life to God in petition, or the amplitude of that life to God in thanksgiving, to whom, in short, intercessory prayer is the continuous experience of his life, will find every week some phases of life in his congregation, not purely individualistic, but typical and measurably common, to which he will wish to give expression in the Sunday service, and for which no research can find expression in "the stores of antiquity." If by the rule of his Church or by his own habit, he is denied the opportunity to give expression in extemporaneous prayer to such experiences, not only is his own life denied its best development, but his congregation also loses that inspiration which freedom and genuineness of expression always affords. In such cases even the liturgy itself is in danger of becoming lifeless. The danger of exclusive use of forms in public devotion is a resultant tendency to formalism. Says Henry Ward Beecher, "The man

[1] H. P. Liddon: *Clerical Life and Work*, p. 36.

that merely comes to administer ordinances on Sundays or Saints' Days, who goes through a regular routine, is nothing but an engineer who runs a machine."[1] That he is in danger of becoming such an engineer the history of the Christian Church abundantly demonstrates. The remedy for this peril would be found in the habitual use of extemporaneous and spontaneous prayer to supplement the more obvious and generic expressions of spiritual life furnished by the historical liturgy.

And this suggests the second advantage in the use of extemporaneous prayer, an advantage intimated by Dr. Rainsford in one sentence in the paragraph quoted above: "If all men prayed always as some men pray sometimes." The Church ought to furnish opportunity for the some men to pray as they can sometimes. It ought to do more; it ought to develop in its ministry this power of spontaneous prayer. It is impossible to doubt that the Church and the worshiping congregation has suffered a real loss, not only in its expression of life but in life itself, because such men as Dr. Rainsford and Phillips Brooks have been trained not to lead their great congregations through the medium of their own spontaneous expression of their own distinctive yet thoroughly human and catholic spiritual experience. The extemporaneous expression of that experience would itself have inspired a like experience in the hearts of others. If

[1] Henry Ward Beecher: *Lectures on Preaching*, i, 16.

all public prayer had been limited to those furnished by the Church, we should have no such book of devotions as the "Prayers of the Ages;" we should not have the prayer of Paul for his friends and companions given in the third chapter of Ephesians, nor the intercessory prayer of Jesus Christ given in the seventeenth chapter of John, nor, indeed, the prayers in the Book of Common Prayer; for these, like all true liturgies, grew out of original acts of free, spontaneous devotion. What the Church and the ministry loses of deep spiritual experience may be best illustrated by a single quotation expressive of the experience of one minister, whose spiritual power in public prayer was no less than his more widely advertised power in public speech. Says Henry Ward Beecher:

I can bear this witness, that never in the study, in the most absorbed moments; never on the street, in those chance inspirations that everybody is subject to, when I am lifted up highest; never in any company, where friends are the sweetest and dearest, — never in any circumstances in life is there anything that is to me so touching as when I stand, in ordinary good health, before my great congregation to pray for them. Hundreds and hundreds of times, as I rose to pray and glanced at the congregation, I could not keep back the tears. There came to my mind such a sense of their wants, there were so many hidden sorrows, there were so many weights and burdens, there were so many doubts, there were so many states of weakness, there were so many dangers, so many perils, there were such

histories, — not world histories, but eternal world histories, — I had such a sense of compassion for them, my soul so longed for them, that it seemed to me as if I could scarcely open my mouth to speak for them. And when I take my people and carry them before God to plead for them, I never plead for myself as I do for them, — I never could. Indeed, I sometimes, as I have said, hardly feel as if I had anything to ask; but oh, when I know what is going on in the heart of my people, and I am permitted to stand to lead them, to inspire their thought and feeling, and go into the presence of God, there is no time that Jesus is so crowned with glory as then! There is no time that I ever get so far into heaven. I can see my mother there; I see again my little children; I walk again, arm in arm with those who have been my companions and co-workers. I forget the body, I live in the spirit; and it seems as if God permitted me to lay my hand on the very Tree of Life, and to shake down from it both leaves and fruit for the healing of my people![1]

That every minister can attain such an experience as that here described is not to be expected; but every minister may have something analogous to it. And to me it is hardly conceivable that the exclusive use of a liturgy should produce such an experience, and as Canon Liddon has said, in the article quoted above, no liturgy can give adequate expression to it.

Whether the minister uses a liturgy or extempore prayer or both, he must be a priest, that is, he must

[1] Henry Ward Beecher: *Lectures on Preaching*, ii, 46, 47.

by prayer interpret the experiences of his congregation both to themselves and to God. And to do this he must understand the experiences of his congregation by sharing those experiences with them. Without this participation in their spiritual life he can be no true priest; he is at best only a "praying machine." He may think he uses extempore prayers and yet repeat well-worn phrases Sunday after Sunday, using devotional forms which have all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of an historic liturgy. He may every Sunday violate the injunction of Jesus Christ, "Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do."[1] In that case his careless prayers will be a weariness to his congregation and an offense to God. Or he may study through the week the spiritual life of his community, he may habitually carry those experiences to God in intercessory prayer for his people, his experience throughout the week may repeat that of the Apostle Paul, "Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;"[2] in which case his public prayers will be true prayers, not ill-disguised addresses to his congregation; and the congregation will forget to be critical of the form of petitions when those petitions reveal to themselves the unknown deeps of their own nature. No less he may be a mechanical administrator of a liturgy, —

[1] Matt. vi, 7.

[2] Rom. i, 9; comp. Eph. i, 16; 1 Thess. i, 2; 2 Tim. i, 3; Phile. 4.

"nothing but an engineer who runs a machine;" he may read prayers emptied of all devotion, — prayers, not prayer, hurrying through them as though the sooner ended the better the service. Or he may pour into that confession of sin, that prayer of thanksgiving, that longing for national welfare and for the unity of the Church, a heart surcharged with all the spiritual desires of the ages. And as he prays, he may realize that a congregation greater than any man can number are joining with him in these expressions of penitence and gratitude and spiritual desire, and that he is walking with them on a great highway well trodden by the feet of the centuries.

The minister, whether offering extemporaneous prayer or using a familiar liturgy, has no higher function than this: to interpret our souls to ourselves and so express to God, for us and with us, our unexpressed spiritual experiences. Jacob, afraid of his brother's just wrath, fled away from the scene of his sin, and laid himself down to sleep with his head pillowed on the stones, careless of his cheated father, his wronged brother, his lonely mother, his offended God; and as he slept he dreamed; and in his dreams "behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it." And when he waked, of his pillow-stones he made an altar, saying, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."[1] Out of our

[1] Gen. xxviii, 10–22.

petty lives, our short-lived triumphs, our discouraging defeats, our embittered enmities, and our disappointing friendships, out of our sins and our sorrows, forgetful of ourselves and of our God, and in spiritual unconsciousness of what we have done, and who we are and what our needs, we come to the House of God; and we want our minister to put that ladder of prayer before us that we may see it and may see the God-inspired prayers ascending and the God-given answers descending; and when at last the strains of the organ die away and we go back to our busy lives, the words upon our lips shall be, not, "What an eloquent preacher we heard to-day!" but, "God is in this world, and though I knew it not I know it now, for God's voice, speaking in the heart of the great congregation and in my own heart, has been interpreted to me by his priest."

## CHAPTER VII

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MINISTRY

RELIGION is the life of God in the soul of man, and the function of the minister is to impart this life to the individual and to disseminate this life through the community. He cannot impart this life to the individual nor disseminate it through the community unless he possesses it himself. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to define this life of God in the soul of man. But Paul has described its fruits. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, serviceableness, fidelity, meekness, self-control." [1] The minister cannot impart these virtues to others unless he possesses them himself; and his power to impart them will be in the ratio in which he does possess them. He must have that companionship with the Father which is the essence of faith, that glad expectation for the race, through the redeeming love of God in Jesus Christ, which is the essence of hope, and that good-will toward all men of every condition and character, which is the essence of love, or he cannot bring other men into the realization of this hope through this companionship with the Father. He need not necessarily have

[1] Gal. v, 22, 23.

an emotional nature, though restrained and regulated emotion will add to his power; he need not necessarily possess spiritual vision, though imagination inspired by devotion and guided by reason will add to his power; but he must have this life of God in his own soul or he cannot give this life to the souls of others.

It is in vain for him to attempt to deceive himself by sedulously cultivating the impression that he can borrow his power from the Bible or the Church without possessing himself that life which has made the Bible and the Church powerful. He cannot even interpret the Bible without some possession of that experience which the Bible portrays. One cannot teach geography to a class of children if he does not know what the sea or the mountain is. Words are but symbols: he must know what these symbols stand for or he cannot impart the knowledge to the pupil. So he must know what the words in the Bible stand for. He cannot interpret such a promise as this, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies,"[1] unless he knows what it is to have iniquity forgiven, disease healed, life redeemed, the coronation of God's loving-kindness and tender mercies. Without this knowledge of the inward experience, his repetition of the words is but the preaching of a phonograph

[1] Psalm ciii, 3, 4.

or a parrot. He cannot interpret the Church unless he has that spiritual experience which has bound the Church together and, despite its various forms and creeds, has made it truly one. The minister is not a voice crying in the wilderness, — he is one of a great body of men and women who through the ages in increasing numbers have been bearing witness to the Living Christ redeeming the world; he is one of a great spiritual apostolical succession, the succession of those on whom Christ has breathed, to whom he has imparted his spirit, and on whom he has laid his commission. But he cannot witness for them unless he shares their experience. No theological education, no laying on of hands, will suffice to make the minister an interpreter of the Church unless he is made one in the body of Christ by that Christian experience which makes the Church one. He cannot, for example, give that Gospel message of the Church, "He pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel," [1] unless he knows what it is truly to repent, what it is unfeignedly to believe the Gospel, and what it is to feel the burden of sin lifted from his shoulders and himself set free. Spiritual experience must be a reality to the minister if he would interpret truly either the Bible or the Church; and his real power will be in the ratio of the reality and simplicity of this spiritual experience. This is what Paul means by the de-

[1] The Book of Common Prayer.

claration, "Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;" this is what Christ means by the promise, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."[1]

But possessing this spiritual power is not alone enough: the minister must be able to impart it. He cannot impart it if he does not possess it, but he may possess it and yet be unable to impart it. His constitution and temperament may be such that he can impart it only incidentally, by his life and example; he may be without power to give direct verbal effective expression to it: then he does not belong in the ministry. Piety or godliness is essential to success in the Christian ministry, but piety or godliness is not sufficient for the Christian ministry without other qualifications. Is it possible to analyze this ability to impart life, to see what are the elements of which this ability is composed? I think it transcends complete analysis. There is something mystical in what we call sometimes personality, sometimes magnetism. It is in no small measure a gift, gained, acquired, or bestowed we know not how. But it is possible for one to cultivate the gift that is in him; and to do this he must at least endeavor to see what is the nature of this gift, what are its constituent elements, and how it can be cultivated.

Essential to this capacity to impart spiritual life is a clearly marked, well defined, eagerly earnest de-

[1] Rom. xii, 6; Acts i, 8. See chap. i.

sire to impart it. For success in the Christian ministry the minister must be inspired by an ambition to make men sharers of his life, to bring men into fellowship with God through Jesus Christ, to take a direct personal share in the great historic movement for the world's redemption, to transform society by the impartation of the Christ spirit into the Kingdom of God. The minister must be a messenger; he must be an apostle; he must have an experience which enables him at least to understand the saying of Malachi, that the priest "is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts," an experience which will give him something of the certitude of Paul, "called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God."[1] It is this experience of a commission received to be fulfilled, of a message received to be delivered, of a life received to be imparted, which distinguishes the preacher from the mere teacher.[2]

No man can go to a theological seminary and get from that seminary a theological system, or an understanding of the Bible in its literary and ethical and theological aspects, and then go out and impart to men what the seminary has imparted to him, and expect success. He cannot purchase from the seminary, as from a jobbing-house, the goods which afterwards he will deliver to his congregation as a retailer. This is, indeed, in a measure true of all education. We call a doctor, not to tell us what

[1] Mal. ii, 7; 1 Cor. i, 1; Rom. i, 1.

[2] See chap. iv, pp. 114–118.

he has learned of anatomy, but to set the broken bone ; the lawyer, not to tell us what he has learned concerning contracts, but to draw for us a contract which will stand the test of time. So we go to the minister, not to learn what he knows about the Bible, or what he knows about theology, but to receive from him a ministry of life, a healing for a broken heart, or a bond of union with our fellow men which will stand the test of life's temptations. This impulse or purpose in the minister must be an interior impulse. It may be awakened by influence from without, but no influence from without can take its place. For this reason I am more than doubtful about the wisdom of addresses to young men in college urging upon them the duty of entering the ministry, or influences by father and mother to send them into the ministerial profession. I would rather put obstacles in their way than clear the way of obstacles. I would rather repeat to them Christ's warning to his disciples : " The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." I would rather bid them ponder the question which Christ put to James and John : " Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ? " [1] I am inclined to say, even at the hazard of being misunderstood, that no man should go into the ministry if he can satisfy his own conscience and his own heart in any other vocation.

[1] John xv, 20 ; Matt. x, 24, 25 ; xx, 22.

This object, to give to the world the message which has been given to him, to impart to the world the life which has been imparted to him, if it be real and vital, not fictitious and assumed, will affect all his life. He will be a minister of the life of God, a messenger preparing the way of the Lord, an apostle by the will of God wherever he goes. He will not put on the ministerial character with his robe or his frock coat when he goes into the pulpit and lay it off when he comes out. He will be possessed by a divine enthusiasm, which will color all his thinking, inspire all his action, and direct and determine all his life. As executive head of a working church, he will direct its activities, not for the purpose of building up a great organization, but for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God; as pastor, he will not be a merely social caller and talker of small talk, he will carry the spirit of faith and hope and love with him into every home he enters, the benediction of his presence will mean immeasurably more than the formal benediction which he pronounces at the close of the church service, and his preaching will derive its power from this identification of his official message with his daily life, and the witness of his daily life to the truth and reality of his message. Says the Rev. J. E. C. Welldon:

> In sermons personality is everything. It is not so much what the preacher says as what he is that makes his sermon. Personality, it is true, may affect preach-

ing in more ways than one. A village priest, let me suppose, has lived many years among his people; his home is theirs, his interests are theirs; he has baptized the children of the village and seen them grow up, he has married them, and some of them he has laid in the grave; there is not a family whose history he does not know, there is not a cottage within whose walls he is not a welcome and frequent visitor; he has shared his people's hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows; he has been the recipient of their confidences, he is their neighbor, their adviser, their friend; he has exemplified in his rectory or vicarage what Coleridge calls "the one idyll of English life." How is it possible that they should distinguish his sermon from his life? It comes to them fraught with a thousand memories of kindness and sympathy and help in hours of need. Such a man's life is his sermon; his sermon is his life. When he enters the pulpit the congregation who listen to him care not to ask if he is eloquent or forcible in his preaching. It is enough that he is their well-known, long-tried pastor, and his sermons are stamped with the indelible impression of his ministry. Because this is so, it would undoubtedly prove a loss to take away the right of preaching from the parochial clergy and confine it to certain preaching orders. Whether these clergy preach well or ill, nobody can preach to their congregations so well as they.[1]

Let me not be misunderstood. I am not urging that the minister should never forget that he is a minister; I would rather say that he should never remember that he is one. Self-consciousness is

[1] J. E. C. Welldon: *Nineteenth Century and After.* Reprinted in *The Living Age*, Oct. 29, 1904.

perilous to success in any profession ; nowhere is it so perilous to success as in the ministerial profession. The bane of the pulpit is professionalism, — not hypocrisy, not deliberate false pretense, but the saying of a thing because it ought to be said, not because the heart prompts the speaker to say it. The minister should never be professional, — neither in the pulpit nor out of it. But he should not be a minister at all unless his whole nature, his executive ability, his social sympathies, his intellectual processes, his æsthetic tastes, his imagination, his ambition, his affections, are all pervaded by the spirit which rejoices in the fellowship of the Great Companion, made companionable to him through Jesus Christ, and by an overmastering desire to impart this companionship, and the life which it brings, to his fellow men.

This passion to impart to the men about him the life of God will make him a living man among living men. It will make him share the spirit, sympathize with the thinking, talk the language of the twentieth century. He may hold to the old theology or to a new theology, but whatever instrument he uses, he will use it for the purpose of bringing the truth of God into the life of his own time, and he will speak to his own age and generation. He will understand the problems of his own time, spiritual, ethical, social, political, and will deal with them ; not because they are problems, but because they are part of the life of living men and

women. In this respect he will follow the example which is set for him by the biblical writers. The Bible is a book for all time, because every writer in it wrote for his own time, — Moses for a people just emancipated from slavery, Isaiah for a people threatened with dire punishment for aggravated sins, Ezekiel for a people in captivity, Paul for a people that were passing out of Hebrew into Greek life. Every one of its writers ministered to his own age, and therefore to all ages.

This passion for men will also make the minister a minister to his own congregation. He will study their wants and seek to understand their lives, that he may minister to them. If he is preaching to a commercial congregation, ignorant of and indifferent to the intellectual perplexities of the scholastic community, he will not preach on Herbert Spencer and Evolution; he will not give to Corinth the sermon which last year he preached at Athens. If he is preaching to a radical congregation, whose whole idea of religion is summed up in the Golden Rule, he will study how he can effect in them a simple, unaffected, and sincere piety. If he is preaching to a devout congregation, whose religion has chiefly consisted in prayer and praise, and who have never brought their religious reverence to bear on the common affairs of life, he will study how he can make them see that to obey is better than sacrifice, that to do the will of Christ in daily life is better than to say to him, "Lord, Lord."

This enthusiasm of humanity, while giving purpose and direction to the whole life, will give distinctive character to each sermon. The first condition of an effective sermon is a definite object. Mark the difference between subject and object. In preparing a sermon the minister should define his object in his own mind before he select either his subject or his text. What do I want to accomplish this Sunday morning, in this congregation, with this discourse? This is the first question for the preacher to ask himself. When a lawyer goes before a jury, it is not in order to give them a lecture on justice, but to win from them a verdict for his client. When a public speaker goes before an audience in a political campaign, it is not to instruct them upon the general question of the tariff, — it is to get votes for the Republican or the Democratic candidate. The minister should learn a lesson from the lawyer and the political speaker. He should regard his congregation as a jury whose verdict he seeks to secure, as citizens whose vote he is determined to obtain. Psychologically speaking, he should address himself to the will, as the citadel of the character, and count no sermon a success which does not at least aim to achieve either some new resolution or some strengthening of a good resolution already formed. Mr. Gladstone has put this principle very clearly in a contrast which he draws between English and Italian preaching:

The fundamental distinction between English and Italian preaching is, I think, this : The mind of the English preacher, or reader of sermons, however impressive, is fixed mainly upon his composition, that of the Italian on his hearers. The Italian is a man applying himself by his rational and persuasive organs to men, in order to move them ; the former is a man applying himself, with his best ability in many cases, to a fixed form of matter, in order to *make it* move those whom he addresses. The action in the one case is warm, living, direct, immediate, from heart to heart ; in the other it is transfused through a medium comparatively torpid. The first is surely far superior to the second in truth and reality. The preacher bears an awful message. Such messengers, if sent with authority, are too much identified with, and possessed by, that which they carry, to view it objectively during its delivery, — it absorbs their very being and all its energies ; they *are* their message, and they see nothing extrinsic to themselves except those to whose hearts they desire to bring it. In truth, what we want is the following of nature, and her genial development.[1]

It is this definiteness of object which distinguishes the sermon from the essay, and which makes some pulpit addresses which would be interesting essays, hopelessly ineffective as sermons. Some years ago I heard a sermon on Methuselah. The preacher explained to us that Methuselah lived for 969 years, and then he proceeded to tell us how much Methuselah would have seen if he had come to the end of his life the year in which the preacher was preaching his sermon. With this as his thread, the preacher

[1] Quoted by John Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, i, 174.

gave us a pictorial history of the English people from about the time of Alfred the Great to the present day. As an essay it might have been charming, but *cui bono?* It did nothing to help the men and women before him to live better lives. As a sermon it was worthless. A friend some years ago attending service with her brother, who was in a large boarding-school, had her attention called by him to the congregation to which the minister was preaching. There were fifty or sixty boys from ten to fifteen years of age, the rest of the congregation was made up of fathers, mothers, grandfathers, and grandmothers; and the minister was preaching — on how to select a wife. The subject had probably been suggested to him either by some book which he had read or some experience which he was approaching; but it did not concern his congregation. The sermon was an aimless sermon; and an aimless sermon is always a useless sermon.

This is the fatal defect with what I may call pretty sermons, sermons which are literary essays, sermons which are the product of the minister's consciousness that he has to preach next Sunday and therefore must "get up a sermon." Under this pressure, he takes from the Bible as his text, "His righteousness is like the great mountains." Then he takes down Michelet and reads for an hour on the mountains. Next he gets out his cyclopedia of illustrations, to find some bits of classic prose, or fine poetry, about the mountains. Then he begins

to write his sermon. The mountains are strong: God's righteousness is strong. The mountains are high: God's righteousness is exalted above the plane of ordinary human righteousness. The mountains are white and pure: God's righteousness is always pure and unsullied. The mountains supply the valleys with water: God's righteousness is a feeding, watering, life-giving righteousness. Under each head of this discourse he works in a bit of poetry from his dictionary of poetical quotations; and his sermon is done. It is a pretty bit of literature, but it is preached with a fictitious earnestness and listened to with a languid interest. This is one way to make a sermon. His neighbor sees in imagination his congregation before him. He has entered into their life, he realizes their temptations, he sees that their great need is a new inspiration to righteousness, righteousness like that of God, — strong, high, pure, life-giving. Their life depends upon their possession of this righteousness — life here, life hereafter. What can he do to impart something of this life-giving righteousness to them? This is the problem which confronts him and with which he wrestles; and if he goes to Michelet, or to his dictionary of poetical quotations, or to his Bible, it is not for a subject, it is for the material which will enable him better to confer on a people whom he loves the power which they need.

If the sermon has this fundamental quality, if it is born of an intense faith in the truth of God, and

an intense sympathy for men who need that truth as an equipment for their own life, it will have two other qualities, — life and brevity. A sermon should never be a lake, it should be a river; it should have movement; a terminus *a quo*, and a terminus *ad quem*. If the minister in preparing his sermon has a definite object in view, all his thinking will naturally concentrate itself on the accomplishment of that object, and the sermon will move with increasing power toward the ultimate, and by the preacher before-perceived, result. This quality of life, or movement, is more than mere logical continuity. In a chain, each link depends upon and is fastened into the preceding link, but the last link does not differ in size from those which preceded it; but each contributing stream adds to the volume and force of the river. The sermon should be a river, not a chain. It should be so constructed that every new thought should not only conduct to the ultimate conclusion, but should reinforce the considerations previously educed: for the object of the sermon is not merely to convince the understanding, it is to transform life; and its value depends, therefore, not merely upon its logical completeness, but upon its reinforcing power. The object of the sermon on sin is not to convince the congregation of the generic fact of human sinfulness, — it is to lead each man in the congregation to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" The sermon on the forgiving love of God has for its object, not merely to convince

the congregation that God does forgive sin, but to lead each burdened soul in the congregation to come to God for forgiveness; and the whole sermon from its opening text to its last sentence should be shaped and fashioned for this purpose. The peroration, so called, should be the natural consummation of a discourse which in every paragraph grows wider and deeper and more forceful to the end.

And this quality of vitality imparted by definiteness of spiritual purpose will prevent the preacher from imposing on the patience of his hearers. How long should a sermon be? This is like asking how large should a gateway be. The size demanded of the gateway depends on the size of the load to be carried through; the length of the sermon depends on the largeness of the idea of which it is a vehicle. People do not object to long sermons, they object to lengthy sermons. If what the minister wants to say can be said in three minutes, the sermon is too long if it takes four minutes. If the minister is full of a theme which for its adequate presentation would require an hour, the sermon seems short if it occupies forty-five minutes. There is, however, an important fact which the modern minister should realize, but does not always, — the change which has been produced within the last twenty-five years by the telegraph and the newspaper. Men think much more quickly than they used to think. Contracts which they would take hours to talk over, they now complete, save for the legal phrasing, in five min-

utes. They read the daily newspaper by the headlines, or, glancing the eye down the column of the editorial, extract its significance by a kind of instantaneous intellectual process. Accustomed to this rapidity of mental action through the week, they go to church, and are wearied by hearing a minister hold a single thought before them, possibly a rather commonplace thought, for fifteen or twenty minutes, or even half an hour, while he is hoping to keep their attention upon it by the beauty with which he attires it, or even insisting that it is the duty of the hearer to continue to listen after he has learned all that the minister has to say. To an alert mind nothing is more wearisome than to stand at the end of a lane and wait for the speaker to come at a leisurely pace to the same terminus. The editor is under pressure to condense: he is constantly attempting to put the substance of a volume in a page, the substance of a page in a column, the substance of a column in a paragraph, and the substance of a paragraph in two lines; the minister, on the other hand, is often under temptation to dilute and expand: he has a single thought, and his question is, how can he so present this thought as to keep the interest of the congregation for twenty minutes or half an hour upon it? There is but one radical remedy for lengthy sermons: it is for the minister, first, to be possessed of the truth, and of the desire to impart it to his congregation because they need it, and, secondly, remorselessly

to fix as his limit *less* time than he thinks is adequate for the due presentation of his subject.

There is a special temptation to ministers to over-elaborate the peroration and the introduction. A friend of mine tells me that he once heard a famous preacher say as he drew towards the close of his discourse, "One word more." My friend looked at his watch; the preacher had been speaking thirty minutes, and he took thirty-five minutes for the "one word more." In my judgment, the time for exhortation has passed away, — the whole sermon should be suffused with a genuine feeling; it may be inflamed with a genuine passion; if it is not, no endeavor to correct the defect by emotional appeals at the end will be other than worse than useless. As to introductions, generally the less introduction the better. The whole service of prayer and praise and Scripture reading has been introduction; that is, it has been preparing the mind and heart of the congregation for the message of the preacher. He who strikes the heart of his subject in the first sentence is the one most likely to secure an attentive listening at the outset of his discourse.

It does not come within the province of this volume to enter in any detail upon the question of the structure of sermons. For this the ministerial reader must be referred to the books on sacred rhetoric, of which there is an abundance; but it is legitimate to say that devotion to the truth and sympathy with men furnish no excuse for slovenly

intellectual processes and no substitute for thorough intellectual preparation. Whether the sermon is written and committed, written and read, or not written at all, it ought to be carefully conceived and thoroughly prepared. Whenever we are able to get back of the finished oration to the processes of preparation, we always find that the latter have involved painstaking study. The apparently easy speaker is uniformly a hard thinker. Spontaneity in utterance is the product of industry in preparation. Mr. Gladstone was endowed by nature with all the equipment necessary for successful oratory, "a voice of singular fullness, depth, and variety of tone; a falcon eye with strange imperious flash; features mobile, expressive, and with lively play; a great actor's command of gesture, bold, sweeping, natural, unforced, without exaggeration or a trace of melodrama; . . . the gift and the glory of words" — but to these he "superadded ungrudging labor." Here are his counsels to a correspondent, evidently born of his own experience:

1. Study plainness of language, always preferring the simpler word. 2. Shortness of sentences. 3. Distinctness of articulation. 4. Test and question your own arguments beforehand, not waiting for critic or opponent. 5. Seek a thorough digestion of, and familiarity with, your subject, and rely mainly on these to prompt the proper words. 6. Remember that if you are to sway an audience you must, besides thinking out your matter, watch them all along. (March 20, 1875.) [1]

[1] John Morley: *Life of Gladstone*, i, 191, 192.

If ever the term "full man" could be applied to any preacher, it could be applied to Phillips Brooks. His sermon seemed to be — and was — the spontaneous expression of a superabundant life; wealth of vocabulary, of illustration, of exposition were the instruments, and spiritual enthusiasm was the secret of his marvelous power. But Dr. Allen, in the account of Phillips Brooks's method of preparation, has made it very clear that the great preacher did not trust to these native gifts alone, — he directed all the forces of his nature with careful guidance to a purposed end.

He took half a sheet of sermon paper, folding it once, thus making four small pages, some seven inches by less than five in their dimensions, which he was to fill. He invariably filled them out to the last remaining space on the last page, as though only in this way could he be sure that he had sufficient material for his sermon. Each plan contained, when it was finished, a dozen or more detached paragraphs, each of which contained a distinct idea, and was to become, when expanded, a paragraph in the finished sermon, placing over against each the number of pages it would occupy when it had been amplified. Then he added the numbers together. Thirty pages was the limit of the written sermon. If these numbers of assigned pages fell short of thirty, he reviewed his plan to see where he might expand, or where to reduce if he had too many.[1]

[1] Condensed from Dr. A. V. G. Allen's account in *The Life and Letters of Phillips Brooks*, and quoted on page 718 of *The Outlook* for March 10, 1901.

More important than the quality of the sermon is the quality of the preacher, for the sermon is an expression of the life of the preacher, and therefore the value of the sermon depends upon the quality of the preacher's life. There is a legend that a famous preacher, having been unable to make his preparations for a certain Sunday, asked the Devil to provide a preacher for him. The Devil replied, "I will preach myself," and he went into the pulpit and preached a vigorous and eloquent sermon against the Devil and all his works. When he came down, his ecclesiastical ally said to him, "I should have thought you would have been afraid to preach that sermon, lest it should destroy your influence." "No," replied the Devil, "it will have no effect, because I did not believe a word of it myself." Like many another ecclesiastical legend, this is a parabolic expression of a divine truth. The power of the sermon depends primarily on the reality of the minister's conviction. It is not enough that he preach the truth, he must preach self-realized truth. He should never be an echo of another man's faith. If he has no experience of sin, he should not preach on sin ; if no experience of God's love, he should not preach on God's love. If all ministers limited their preaching by their own experience, the sermons would be shorter and there would be fewer of them, but they would make up in effectiveness what they lacked in number and in length. It is for this reason that I object to creed subscrip-

tion, — not because I object to the creed, but I object to any system which puts a preacher under the temptation to become the advocate of another man's faith, not the interpreter and expounder of his own.

For this reason candor seems to me to be essential to the preacher. There are certain virtues which may be called professional virtues. No man can be an efficient soldier without courage; though he may be efficient as a soldier without honesty. No man can be an efficient merchant without honesty; though he may be efficient as a merchant without courage. Candor is the professional virtue of the minister. He cannot be truly successful without it. He must have convictions and the courage of his convictions. Those cynics are mistaken who imagine that the preacher is popular who panders to popular prejudice. The answer to their cynicism is to be found in the history of the American pulpit. From Jonathan Edwards to the present day, and in all the denominations alike, the great preachers have been heroic preachers. Not to go beyond the circle of our own time, Finney, Channing, the Beechers, father and son, Bushnell, Phillips Brooks, — no one ever questioned the courage of these men, no one ever doubted their candor, and crowds thronged to listen to them. The American people like a brave man, a man of strong convictions and the courage of them.

With this candor and courage must go another

quality which does not always accompany them, respect for one's fellow men. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" involves more than a spirit of mutual good-will, it involves also a spirit of mutual respect. The preacher must understand, and he must have intellectual respect for, opinions which he believes to be thoroughly erroneous. It may be laid down as an axiom that you can never persuade another man to your point of view until you appreciate his point of view. You can never get another to take your position until you have in imagination taken his position. If a Protestant would persuade a Roman Catholic, he must first sympathetically understand the Roman Catholic doctrines of Papal Infallibility, the Adoration of the Virgin, Transubstantiation, and the Real Presence. If an orthodox believer would convince an Evolutionist of the truth of the doctrine of the Fall, he must first understand what Evolution means, and what are the grounds on which the scientist accepts it. If the preacher would impart spiritual vision to men and women in his congregation who are without it, he must first enter sympathetically into their conditions of life, understand what the counting-room is, and what its temptations and its struggles, and what the life of modern society and its illusions and snares. If he would persuade the employer to some different attitude towards the trade-union, he must first see the trade-union with the employer's eyes, and comprehend the friction which naturally

if not inevitably arises in our time between the organizations of labor and of capital. This is what Paul did. "Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, so that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."[1] This is what Christ did when he came to earth and entered, not merely into our physical conditions but into our spiritual experiences, and was tempted in all points like as we are, that he might become our Redeemer. The preacher must by imagination enter into the life of the people if he would impart to the people the life that is in Christ his Master. The preacher must understand us if he desires us to understand him.

There are three difficulties which tend to prevent the minister from entering thus sympathetically into the life of those whom he is addressing. He must be an educated man; and education develops culture, taste, and the critical spirit, and these tend to separate him from those who are without education, cultivation, and taste. Ignorance and boorishness build up a wall upon the one side, cultivation and taste upon the other. The preacher must be able to sympathize with the ignorant and the boorish, not-

[1] 1 Cor. ix, 20–22.

withstanding his cultivation and his taste. His interest in people is therapeutic; he studies them as a physician studies his patients, that he may cure them. This is necessary, and yet this habit of studying men as specimens, so to speak, as set apart from him and objects of his ministry, easily tends to develop in him the spirit of self-conceit; and religious self-conceit is a form of Pharisaism. Thus, unless in all his study of mankind he is able to preserve the spirit of respect for mankind, the more he studies, the less competent does he become to do his Master's work among men. Finally, since vices and intellectual errors arouse his conscience, his indignation is stirred against them. The age of physical persecution has passed, but the spirit which led men in the Middle Ages to punish heresy with fire and sword still exists. If he has that tolerance of error which is born of indifference to it, he has not the earnestness which enables him to combat it. If he has that indignation against error which accompanies the spirit of religious or intellectual self-conceit, he has not that human touch which enables him to get entrance to the minds of the men whom he wishes to convince and convert. Thus his education, his professional interest, and his conscience combine to separate him from men, and will separate him from them, unless he sedulously cultivates that spiritual imagination which enables him sympathetically to understand all sorts and conditions of men, and that respect for humanity which enables

him to secure their sympathetic hearing for his message.

Another quality essential to the preacher, especially in our time, is a spirit of divine hopefulness. The pessimist has no place in the American pulpit. The preacher should be a leader among men. If he is to be a leader, he must set before himself an ideal, and he must have in himself some expectation that that ideal can be attained. I do not mean that he is to look only on the bright side of things. He is to have the courage to see things as they are, but he must have faith in a God who is in the world making things better, and, born of this faith, an incorrigible expectation that they will be better, and an invincible determination to do something to make them better. He must believe that out of every day will walk a better to-morrow; he must believe, not with Browning, that "God 's in his heaven, all 's right with the world," [1] but that God is in his world, and therefore all will yet be well with it. "We are saved by hope." [2] He who has no vision to see a better future, and no expectation inspiring him to its attainment, does not belong in the Christian ministry.

With this spirit of candor, courage, consideration, and hopefulness should go patience. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night

[1] Robert Browning: *Pippa Passes.*

[2] Rom. viii, 24.

and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how."[1] The kingdom of God, then, is a growth; and growth requires time, and time demands patience. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."[2] The impatience of preachers is one cause of the constant changes in the ministry and the consequent short and inefficacious pastorates. A young man once called upon me to ask my help in finding a new pastorate. To my question why he had left his last one, he replied, "The town of —— was nearer hell on earth than any place I ever saw." "And what," said I, "is a minister for, except to change a place that is like hell on earth to one as near as possible to a heaven on earth?" He could give me no answer. Here was lamentable lack both of courage and of patience. When I went into the ministry my father gave me this counsel: "It is a principle in mechanics that if an object is at one point, and you wish to carry it to another point, you must carry it through all the intermediate points. That is equally true in morals. If your congregation is at one point, and you wish to take them to another point, do not try to carry them across; carry them one point at a time." This is the principle of patience concretely applied; it will prevent the progressive preacher from breaking his connections with

[1] Mark iv, 26, 27. [2] James v, 7.

his congregation in a too great eagerness to advance them. If a conservative preacher finds himself the pastor of a progressive church, or a progressive preacher finds himself the pastor of a conservative church, he should not seek a change. Let him stay where he is and attempt, one step at a time, to convert them to his better way of thinking. It is a mistake to suppose that honesty requires any minister to avow all his beliefs at once, regardless of the effect of his avowal on his auditors.[1] It is a still greater mistake to suppose that he must proclaim his dissent from his church and then depart from it. No modern preacher, however radical, differs more fundamentally from his church than did Jesus from the Judaism of his time, or Paul from the synagogues, or Luther from the Roman Catholic Church. But Christ remained in the Jewish Church until it excommunicated him, and Paul preached in the synagogues until he was driven out, and Luther remained a Roman Catholic until the Roman Catholic Church disowned him. These are good examples for dissidents to follow in our time. If all radical preachers go into radical congregations and preach radicalism, and all conservative preachers go into conservative congregations and preach conservatism, the divisions in the Church of Christ are made deeper and wider, and progress in the Church of Christ becomes impossible. Candor, courage, con-

[1] "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. — John xvi, 12."

sideration, hopefulness, and patience constitute perhaps a not too common combination of qualities; but they are essential to the highest and more enduring efficiency in the Christian ministry.

What courses of study shall a minister pursue to develop the qualifications and increase the equipment for his work? Assuming that he has graduated from a theological seminary, has acquired there New Testament Greek, some knowledge of the Hebrew, such an acquaintance with historical theology as will prevent him from mistaking old errors in a new dress for new discoveries, such a knowledge of the ecclesiastical machinery of his own church as will enable him to work understandingly and loyally in it, and such acquaintance with the English language as will make him reasonably successful if not a master in the use of it, what are the lifelong courses of study which he must pursue? They all seem to me to be reducible to three branches.

He must study human nature. The best literary material for such study is furnished by the great novelists, poets, and dramatists. They are the interpreters of life; and life in its essential elements is the same in all ages, under all conditions, and in all civilizations. But he should not merely read the great novelists, poets, and dramatists for entertainment; he should study them for the purpose of ascertaining what are the motives which actuate men, what the life which hides behind the masks they wear, what the real personality hidden beneath the

conventional incognito. He must familiarize himself also with the conditions of modern life and of modern thought. He must know both the intellectual and the industrial life of his age, for it is to that life he is to apply the principles and precepts of Jesus Christ, it is of that life he is appointed to be a leader, it is that life which he has to guide toward the Kingdom of God. And he must study human nature sympathetically in the individual members of his parish. He must be a man among men, and must cultivate in himself the receptive habit of mind, the habit of listening and considering the views and sentiments of others. He must receive impressions from his people through the week, that he may impart impressions to them on Sunday.

He must study the Bible; because in no other literature will he find such an interpretation of the higher spiritual experiences of men, such an exposition of the divine remedies for the sins and sorrow which afflict mankind. He should remember, too, that there is a great difference between studying the Bible and studying the commentaries on the Bible. He who can get back to the Bible itself, who can apprehend the social and ethical principles which underlie the Old Testament jurisprudence, and which are expounded and applied to their own times by the Hebrew prophets, who can understand the great principles of individual life which find expression in the precepts of Jesus Christ, and inter-

pretation in the philosophy of Paul and of John, and then can apply those moral and spiritual and those social and individual principles to the problems of our own time, will always be an original preacher.

But more important than his study either of human nature or of the Bible is his cultivation of acquaintance with God. He must learn to look, in the events occurring in his own generation, for the God who is as truly in the history of America to-day as he was in the history of Palestine in the olden times. Christ denounced the Pharisees because they could not discern the signs of the times. The prophet of to-day must perceive what God is doing in the world to-day if he would coöperate with God. But it is not only or chiefly in events that he is to seek for the Great Companion, — he must seek for him in the quiet of his own soul. Some one has well said that studying is searching for new truth, meditating is dwelling with familiar truth. The minister must find time not only to study but to meditate, not only to do and to think, but also to listen. To the lover of literature the most fruitful hours are not those spent with his books of reference about him, digging for knowledge as for a hid treasure ; they are those spent in the quiet of the library, or the greater quiet of the forest, in the summer time, with Browning or Shakespeare or Carlyle or Tennyson or Whittier in hand. We read for ten or fifteen minutes, then the book drops into our lap, and we begin to think

the author's thoughts, to dream his dream, to see his visions. These hours in which we simply listen to what the men of genius have to say, — are they not the most fruitful hours of our life? The most sacred hours with nature are not those in which with spade or hoe we are digging, the better to cultivate fruits or flowers, nor those in which with hammer we break the rocks, or with magnifying glass we examine the flowers, to learn the secrets which nature has written in her book. Some day in June we lie down on the grass and simply take what nature has to give us. The squirrel runs up the tree and looks at us; the robin hops along, peeps at us, utters a little note, picks up his breakfast, and flies away again; the cricket shows himself in the grass close by, and chirps a cheerful note to us. We are not studying, we are scarcely thinking, we are simply listening. And we are learning more from nature then than when we are striving to wrest her secrets from her.

As we listen to what great men have to say to us, and to what nature has to say to us, so may we listen in silence and solitude to what God has to say to us. Savonarola is reported to have said, "We are too busy praying ever to listen to God." There is danger in our time that we of the Christian ministry, in this strenuous and eager life, shall be so busy working for God that we reserve little time to pray to him and no time to listen to him. The best hours, the most fruitful hours, the hours

fullest of inspiration for future service are those in which our only utterance is, "Speak, Lord; thy servant is listening," and the only message we receive is, "Be still, and know that I am God." [1] The busier the minister is, the more exacting his parish, the more multifarious his duties, the more important is it that he keep sacred from every interruption, every call, whether of pleasure or of duty, this quiet hour.

[1] 1 Sam. iii, 9; Psalm xlvi, 10.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME MINISTERS OF THE OLDEN TIME

THE system of priests and sacrifices Israel had in common with other and pagan religions, but the order of the prophets was unique. They belonged to no ecclesiastical order, they received no ordination, they had no ecclesiastical authority. It is true that in other religions there have been seers and soothsayers who possessed characteristics and made claims somewhat resembling those of the Hebrew prophets, but the contrasts are far greater than the parallels. Nor is it necessary to go into those contrasts in any detail. It must suffice to say that there is not to be found anywhere in human history any such body of religious writers and teachers, bound together only by a common faith, believing themselves to have a message from the Eternal, and bringing that message to bear upon the practical affairs of life — any order parallel to that of the prophets.

Moses was the first of them. Peter, James, John, and Paul were the last of them. Moses is called a prophet, although he is more generally known as the great lawgiver. The New Testament prophets have another name, — they are called apostles

rather than prophets; yet they have the essential spiritual characteristics which belong to the order with which spiritually they are connected, and with which, I think, we modern ministers should also be spiritually connected, if we are to hope to have power in our ministry. How important was this unecclesiastical order of the prophets is indicated by the fact that something like a quarter of the whole literature of the ancient Hebrews, as it is contained in the Old Testament, is composed of the prophetic writings of these ministers of the olden times. It is of these prophets, their spirit, their messages, their methods, I speak in this chapter. For they are models whom we are to study, though not slavishly to imitate. It may be said of them, as Paul and Barnabas said of themselves, "We also are men of like passions with you," and what Paul said of himself, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part." [1] We have been too prone to set these messengers of Jehovah apart by themselves, as though God no longer spoke to man as he spoke to them, as though either God had grown dumb or men deaf, as though inspiration were a lost grace, and receiving it and speaking because of it were a lost art. But if they were not men, possessing ordinary human attributes, and speaking and acting under the recognized laws of human nature, it would be idle and indeed impossible to study them. It is only as we can share their experiences

[1] Acts xiv, 15; 1 Cor. xiii, 9.

that it is possible for us to understand them, and it is only that we may both understand and share their experiences that we profitably study them. Only as the preacher shares the experiences and characteristics of the prophets can he be truly successful in his ministry. It is to a study of these characteristics I ask the reader to accompany me in this chapter.

In the first place, these prophets claimed to be representatives of God. Their very name indicates this claim. "Prophet" is a speaker for another. Says Ewald, —

> Confining ourselves for the present to the Hebrew language, its name for a prophet denotes originally a *loud, clear speaker*, yet always one who declares the mind and words of another who does not himself speak; just as a dumb or retired person must have a speaker to speak for him and declare his thoughts, so must God, who is dumb with respect to the mass of men, have his messenger or speaker; and hence the word in its sacred sense denotes him who speaks not of himself, but as commissioned by his God.[1]

This is the first and the most essential characteristic of the Hebrew prophet. He is a speaker for another, and that other the invisible, inaudible God. He is an interpreter of God to men. He is called, therefore, a man of God, or a man of the

[1] G. H. A. von Ewald: *Commentary on the Prophets of the Old Testament*, vol. i, p. 8. Compare A. P. Stanley: *History of the Jewish Church*, Lecture XIX, vol. i, pp. 367–369; G. A. Smith: *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. i, p. 12.

Spirit, or an interpreter. He is said to be full of the Spirit. He speaks with this authority, implicit or explicit. Sometimes he dramatically speaks in the name of God: as though God were speaking, he speaks. Thus Paul says: "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Thus Micaiah says: "As the Lord liveth, what my God saith, that will I speak."[1] Thus a very common introduction to a prophecy is the phrase "Thus saith the Lord." The prophet customarily claims to have been called to his mission by God. He describes, or others describe for him, this call from God, which is sometimes attended by dramatic incidents, as Moses called at the burning bush, Isaiah in the Temple, Ezekiel in the desert. Where there is no such dramatic incident accompanying and attesting the call, or where it is relegated to a secondary place, the call is not less clear in the consciousness of the prophet. Thus Jeremiah is called in his childhood and Amos while he is following the flocks as a herdsman.[2]

It is this speaking for God which distinguishes the true prophet from the false prophet. The true prophet is not distinguished by the fact that all his predictions come true; they do not all of them come

[1] Deut. xxxiii, 1; Judg. xiii, 6; Hos. ix, 7, R. V.; Num. xi, 26; xxvii, 1, 8; Is. lxi, 1, xliii, 27, R. V.; Job xxxiii, 23; Dan. v, 16; 2 Cor. v, 20; 1 Kings xxii, 14.

[2] Ex. iii, 1–18; Is. vi; Ezek. i, ii, iii, 10–14; Jer. i, 4–7; Amos vii, 14, 15.

true, — he is sometimes mistaken. He is not distinguished from the false prophet merely by a higher ethical standard, though his ethical standard is higher. The true prophet speaks as a representative of God; the false prophet as an interpreter and representative of men. The false prophet studies the popular currents, watches to see what people think, asks what they want to hear, and gives them the message they desire. So he cries, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace.[1] So, in the time when the nation is threatened and the people want a counsel, he brings them the counsel which they want, or think they want.[2] The false prophet has — to use the American phrase — his ear to the ground; he watches the currents of public sentiment, as a politician does, or as an editor does, or as I fear some ministers do. This is the false prophet, the man who is an interpreter of popular sentiment. The true prophet has his ear toward God; he is listening for the voice of God; he brings the word of God to mankind; he is impelled to give his message, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. He is the messenger of a great, an infinite, a Divine King, Lord, Father.[3]

It is this claim on the prophet's part to speak for God, and in the name of God, that distinguishes him from the wise men, and so distinguishes the books of prophecy from the books of "Proverbs"

[1] Jer. vi, 13, 14. [2] For example, 1 Kings xxii, 1–23.
[3] Ezek. ii, 5, 7, iii, 11.

or "Ecclesiastes." The prophet does not grope his way after truth; he does not argue; he does not present hypotheses and reasons deduced from experience for them. The prophet is not a philosopher. He, therefore, has no system to propound. We can deduce theological systems from the prophets, but we cannot find a system of theology in the prophets; so we can build a house out of the trees of the forest, but the trees of the forest do not constitute a house. The prophet is a witness. He testifies to the things that he has heard and seen. I believed, therefore have I spoken, — this is his message.[1] He is a man of visions, and he reports the visions. He is preëminently a witness-bearer.

And yet he does not claim superiority to the men about him. He does not claim to be their master or their lord, or to have access to sources of knowledge which they do not possess, or to be their spiritual superior, to belong to a spiritual aristocracy. He believes that God is a Universal Presence; that he is in all nature, in all history, in all human experience. The prophets do not think that they are inspired more than other men are inspired; only that they have heard the voice, have obeyed the vision, have understood the message. The commonest operations of the human mind they attribute to the direct influence of the Spirit of God. This truth is strikingly illustrated in "The Ploughman's Ode:"

[1] Psalm cxvi, 10; 2 Cor. iv, 13.

Listen, and hear ye my voice,
Attend, and hear ye my speech.
Is the ploughman never done with his ploughing,
With the opening and harrowing of ground?
Does he not, when its surface is leveled,
Scatter fennel, and sow cummin broadcast,
And duly set wheat there and barley,
And for its border plant spelt?
It is Jahveh who has taught these right courses,
It is his God who has trained him.

We do not thresh fennel with sledges,
Nor are cart-wheels rolled over cummin,
But fennel is threshed with a staff,
And cummin is threshed with a rod.
Do we ever crush bread-corn to pieces?
Nay, the threshing goes not on forever,
But when over it cart-wheels are driven,
Or sledges, our care is never to crush it.
This also from Jahveh proceeds:
Wonderful counsel, great wisdom has He.[1]

In their view everything proceeds from Jehovah. There is no difference between the natural and the supernatural: all the natural is supernatural; all the supernatural is natural. This inspiration which is universal, the prophet recognizes as possible to the men about him. He speaks that he may give them the hearing ear and the seeing eye; that he may lead them to hear the voices that he has heard, to see something of the vision that he has seen.

This vision does not always come to him, it is not always presented, suddenly and unexpectedly. Sometimes it is, sometimes not. For the prophet has not laid aside his personality in taking on this

[1] Isaiah xxix, 23–29, Cheyne's translation.

influence of God; after the inspiration he is no less the person that he was before. He is still the same man, with the same temperament, the same qualities, the same characteristics. These prophets do not believe that a man should be an empty and broken vessel in order to be meet for the Master's use; they believe that he should be a strong, vigorous, manly man to be meet for the Master's use. When Ezekiel sees the vision in the desert and throws himself prostrate on the ground, the voice that comes to him says, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee." [1] It is to men standing on their feet, all their senses alert, all their powers active, that God speaks. These prophets are not passive recipients and parrot-like repeaters. The message given to them becomes a part of their own faith, inspires their personality, and transforms them and makes them what they are. So it comes to them according to their temperament. Sometimes it flashes upon them in a vision, as it flashes upon Isaiah in the Temple. Sometimes they long for it and wait for it as a man coming across the sea watches on the watch tower for an expected haven. Sometimes they pray for it with unutterable longings and it comes in answer to their prayer. Sometimes they have to fight for it, and it is the product only of a hard life battle. So Habakkuk fought for the vision that came to him: "O Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear! I cry

[1] Ezek. ii, 1.

out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!" This is the beginning of his experience; listen to the end:

> Although the fig tree shall not blossom,
> Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
> The labor of the olive shall fail,
> And the fields shall yield no meat;
> The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
> And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
> Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
> I will joy in the God of my salvation.[1]

His faith is not a ripe fruit that has dropped into his open palm from the bough of a tree: he has had to plough, to harrow, and to dig for it as men dig for a hid treasure; he has had to battle in order that he might win it. Paul has to fight the good fight of faith that he may receive faith's coronation: "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Cannot we see how life and death and principalities and powers and things present and things to come have been attempting to separate him from God; how he has had to fight for his faith before he could call himself "more than conqueror"?[2] This faith was not received in the silence of the mind, in the quietude of a retreat; it was won through battle and in the midst of a strenuous, energetic life. The

[1] Hab. i, 2, iii, 17, 18. [2] 2 Tim. iv, 7; Rom. viii, 37–39.

story of Hosea affords a striking illustration of one of the ways in which these prophets learned the truth they were to teach to others. His wife was unfaithful to him. But he loved her and would not put her away from him. Then she grew weary of him; perhaps of his very pity and love, and deserted him for some unknown lover who could satisfy her greed for gold and her ignoble ambition. Deserted by this lover, she sank lower and lower, until at last she sold herself to a life of public harlotry. So Hosea at last found her, a helpless slave, bought her, though she had fallen so low that he paid for her less than he would have paid for one of the poorer and cheaper slaves, and took her back, never more to be his wife, but was evermore her guardian and protector. And from his own heart's sore trial, and from his own patient love toward an apostate wife, he learned the lesson of God's love which forms the burden of his prophecy: God is the faithful lover; Israel is the unfaithful wife; sin is against love, not merely against law; but love is infinite and eternal and cannot be destroyed.[1]

These prophets are not mere messengers. They are not like a telegraph boy who takes a sealed letter from the office and carries it to some one and does not know what it contains. They are not like phonographs to whom the message is communicated and by whom the message is repeated. Their messages are not dictated to them; they are not merely

[1] Hosea i–iii.

amanuenses who write down what is dictated. The message enters into them, transforms their nature, makes them what they are. So they are holy men, spiritual men, godly men, with the message wrought into their own consciousness and coming forth from their own consciousness. It becomes part of their nature. The word is in their hearts as a burning fire shut up in their bones. They cannot keep it to themselves; it must find expression. "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" cries Paul. "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" cries Amos.[1] They must speak. Their message, just because it has become a part of their very nature, it is impossible for them to retain.

Hence when this message is given forth, it is transformed by their personality. How much of what Isaiah said was Isaiah, and how much was the Spirit of God, no man can tell. How much of the sermon which the preacher will write for next Sunday is born of his own thinking, how much did he get out of his theological studies, how much came of his reading of Carlyle or Calvin, Emerson or Edwards? Who can answer this question? He has been reading all these years, listening to messages, studying carefully; the results of his study and thinking have entered into his character, and have been made a part of himself; and then they come forth suffused with his own personality.

Consequently these messages of the ancient pro-

[1] Jer. xx, 9; 1 Cor. ix, 16; Amos iii, 8.

phets are human messages. Into the message of each the life of the messenger enters. The message transforms the character of the messenger, but the character of the messenger no less gives color and character to the message. Each prophet speaks according to the spirit and temper of his own nature. Paul uses the same word to express the spirit of holiness within a man and the Holy Spirit operating on a man. Oftentimes we cannot tell which he means. Sometimes I do not think he knows himself, the two are so interwoven in his experience. This Holy Spirit operating within has so changed the spirit within, and this spirit so derives its life from the Spirit without him, that he cannot distinguish one from the other, and uses the same word to mean either, or both in their commingled action.

Hence the messages of these prophets are individual messages. Amos, the Carlyle of Hebrew literature, is an interpreter of the divine conscience; Hosea, a poet of infinite tenderness, is an interpreter of the divine mercy; Isaiah, the statesman-prophet of his people, is largely a preacher of political righteousness; Micah, the prophet of the poor, is the socialistic voice of his age; Habakkuk is the prophet of victorious faith conquering a native pessimistic skepticism; Jeremiah is the first individualist among the Hebrew prophets, a Protestant ages before Protestantism; Ezekiel is the voice of the Hebrew liturgists or churchmen; the Great

Unknown, the prophet whose writings appear in the latter part of the book of Isaiah, is the most catholic of all this ancient ministry, a fountain and inspiration to largeness of faith and hope for all the ages. Thus in these messengers of the Lord is every type of temperament, and therefore every type of message: justice and mercy, individualism and socialism, ecclesiasticism and Protestantism, pessimism and optimism. These men do not all have the same message; they do not all repeat the same story; they are not mere echoes of a voice. The life has entered into them, commingling with their life, and comes forth tinged by their pervading experiences. They are transformed by the message, and the message is also transformed by them.

These men, thus speaking forth from God, get the power of their message from the fact that they are interpreting God, — not echoing the public sentiment of their time, but receiving, understanding, appreciating, and repeating the message that all men might receive from God if they would but use their ears to hear. Some men have power over an audience by reason of their innate character, their mere force of will. They master other men by the power of their personality. This is not the case with the prophets; at least they declare that it is not. When Moses is asked to go on his mission, he protests that he is not the one to go. "I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue," he says. When Isaiah is called upon to go on his mission, he re-

plies, "I am a man of unclean lips." He does not think himself the one to regenerate the people. When Jeremiah is called, he pleads his youth and inexperience as a reason why he should not go. "I cannot speak," he says, "for I am a child." When Paul is called as a missionary to the Gentiles, he argues that he is better fitted to be an apostle to the Jews because they know how intense a Jew he has been.[1] These are not men with a transcendent, innate, self-conscious power which carries them forth against all obstacles and enables them to overcome all difficulties. That is not the secret of their power.

Some men borrow their power from their audiences. The power of an orator, wrote Mr. Gladstone, "is an influence principally received from his audience (so to speak) in vapor, which he pours back upon them in a flood."[2] That is, no doubt, the secret of a great deal of real, genuine pulpit and platform oratory. But these prophets spoke to inattentive audiences, indifferent audiences, hostile audiences. Their audiences did not give them in vapor what they gave back in a flood. Ezekiel compares the people to whom he is to speak to a valley of dry bones. Isaiah declares of the people of his day that their hearts are fat and their ears are heavy and their eyes are shut, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with

[1] Exodus iv, 10; Isaiah vi, 5; Jer. i, 6; Acts xxii, 17–21.

[2] Quoted by John Morley: *Life of Gladstone*, i, 191.

their heart.[1] The power of these prophets was not in their own innate sense of power; it was not borrowed from the people to whom they spoke and reflected back to them again; it was in their consciousness of the presence in them of the living God, speaking in them, giving them their message, transforming their nature, imparting to them their life, sending them on their errand.

Intuitionalists and idealists as they were, yet they were practical men. They were idealists and intuitionalists in obtaining their message, they were practical men in giving it. This differentiates them from the poet. The poet sees his vision, and then he expresses himself because he wishes to express himself. It is a pleasure for him to do so. As one sits down at the organ and plays upon it because it expresses music, though there be no one in the room, so the poet plays upon the instrument of his imagination and gives forth the utterances, whether men will read his poetry or whether they will not. The men to whom this poem will come are not in his mind at all; it is the vision which is in his mind. This is not so with the prophets. They are eager to give their vision to their fellow men. All their prophecies have a definite spiritual purpose, and if we study the history of the time, we can see what that purpose is. They come to convince men of their sins or to inspire men with hope, to cast men from their pride or to lift them up from their despair;

[1] Ezek. xxxvii, 1–11; Isaiah vi, 9, 10.

but they come always with some message of healing, of help, of medicine. It is a message from God, but it is no less a message to men. It is this which gives their messages such practicality. They do not deal with sin or with righteousness in the abstract, but with the actual sins and the actual virtues of the men of their time.

It is sometimes said that conviction of sin is no longer experienced as it was experienced in the days of our fathers. But I wonder whether our conviction of sin to-day is not a much better conviction of sin than that in the beginning of the nineteenth century. I am inclined to think that it is. Our fathers had a conviction of sin: we have a conviction of sins; and it is better to have a conviction of sins than a conviction of sin. Notwithstanding their conviction of sin, drunkenness, or at least drinking to excess, was not uncommon at church ordinations. Notwithstanding their conviction of sin, they left slavery undisturbed. Our conviction of sin may not be so profound, but we have abolished slavery, we have driven the saloon out of the church, and perhaps by and by we shall drive it out of the highways. Our religion may be less spiritual, but it is more practical than the religion of our fathers. In this respect it is more like the religion of the prophets. One quotation may serve to illustrate the practicality of their teaching:

> Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou seest not? mortified ourselves, and Thou markest it not?

Surely, on your fast-day ye pursue your business, and all money lent on pledge ye exact ?
Surely, it is for strife and contention ye fast, and to smite with the fist the poor ;
Such fasting as yours to-day will not make your voice heard on high.
Can such be the fast that I choose, a day when a man mortifies himself ?
To droop one's head like a bulrush, and to make sackcloth and ashes one's couch —
Wilt thou call this a fast, and a day acceptable to Jahveh ?
Is not this the fast that I choose, says Jahveh ?
To loose the fetters of injustice, to untie the bands of violence,
To set at liberty those who are crushed, to burst every yoke asunder.
Is it not to break thy bread to the hungry, and to bring the homeless into thy house ;
When thou seest the naked to cover him, and to hide not thyself from thy own flesh ?
Then will thy light break forth as the dawn, thy wounds will be quickly healed over,
Thy righteousness will go before thee, and Jahveh's glory will be thy reward.[1]

The writings of the prophets abound in such practical expositions of religious duty. The sins which they most condemn are sins of inhumanity to man. Rarely if ever do they condemn absence from church, failure in sacrifice, disregard of ordinances, or even lack of prayer. What they condemn is injustice and impurity and cruelty. Rarely if ever do they send men to the temple or to the sacrifice for forgiveness. "Wash you, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well. . . . Come

[1] Isaiah lviii, 3–8 : Cheyne's translation.

now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow;" this is the burden of their message.[1] White because of temple and sacrifice and priestly ceremonial? No. Because of ceasing from iniquity, or as another prophet expresses it, breaking off sins by righteousness.[2] The preaching of the prophets is spiritual because the message is derived from God, not from man. It is practical because it is applied to the daily affairs of daily life.

For the same reason it is dramatic. These prophets are not separated from humanity because they live with God; on the contrary, the more they live with God the more they are identified with humanity; the more they enter into the secret places of the Most High, the more they enter into the common experiences of their fellow men. Hence they are able to interpret human experience. And this interplay of the human experience and the divine response — and again the divine message and the human response — makes the prophetic writings dramatic. A very familiar passage in Micah may serve to illustrate this dramatic element and at the same time its peculiar character. It is a trialogue between the Prophet, Jehovah, and the People:

*The Prophet.* Hear ye now what the Lord saith: Arise, contend thou before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice. Hear, O ye mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye enduring foundations of the earth:

[1] Isaiah i, 16–18. [2] Daniel iv, 27.

for the Lord hath a controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.

*Jehovah.* O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him; remember from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteous acts of the Lord.

*The People.* Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

*The Prophet.* He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. [1]

Not less strikingly dramatic is the opening of the prophecy of the "Second Isaiah," the "Great Unknown," — a dialogue between the Divine Voice commanding the Prophet, and the Prophet asking for his message and expostulating with the command, and finally receiving the word which he is to proclaim.

*The Voice.* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry

[1] Micah vi, 1-8.

unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; that she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. The voice of one saying, Cry.

*The Prophet.* What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

*The Voice.* The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.[1]

This prophet has felt the burden of his time, its sin, its penalty; and he has seen the transitoriness of Israel, — its glory passing away, its city in ruins, its temple abandoned. But he has seen more. He has seen the manifestation of God in the captivity of Israel, that is, in the punishment of the Nation for its sins and in the redemption which he sees approaching, that is, in the divine pardon of a redeemed people; and behind this transitoriness of the Nation's glory, and behind the penalty and the pardon, and in both penalty and pardon, he sees the Eternal working out his plans for the redemption of the race through Israel.

[1] Isaiah xl, 1–8.

The Hebrew prophets saw beneath the surface, and therefore they saw beyond the day. They foretold the future because they perceived truly the present. They understood the real meaning of events, therefore they comprehended the trend of events. They saw that God is in human history working out the redemption of the world; and this vision of God in his world gave them a foresight as to the outcome of God's work in the final issue of human history. This insight gave them foresight and made them foretellers. They were foretellers because they were forthtellers. Because they spake as interpreters of an inward vision they turned their faces and the faces of their people toward the future.

And as this spirit gave them foresight, so it gave them hopefulness; because it was the foresight of men who believed that the moral forces are greater than all other forces, that God is more than all they that are leagued against God. They were hopeful for their Nation, for they could not believe that the Nation would abandon Jehovah; and when finally they were forced to the conclusion that the Nation had abandoned Jehovah, they were hopeful for a new Nation which God would raise up and through which he would save the world. Even in their hours of darkest pessimism they were optimists; even at the time when they beheld the ruin of the destroyed Nation they still hoped for the redemption of mankind.

And this foresight and this hopefulness gave them

courage. Jeremiah, standing for God and God's truth, as he sees it, facing the charge that he has turned traitor to his country and is a friend of the Chaldeans, because he sees the victory of the Chaldeans, let down into the dungeon and lying there in the mire, and still maintaining his courage and his faith in God; Paul rescued from the mob on the floor of the temple, lifted up, bleeding, dust-stained, scarred, and standing there and turning to the officer to ask, "May I not speak to this mob?" and on those temple stairs repeating the message of a redeemed world through Jesus Christ our Lord,[1] — where shall we find in human history more splendid illustrations of magnificent courage than in these prophets of the Old Testament and the New Testament?

No man belongs in the Christian pulpit unless he is the successor of the Prophets and the Apostles, in a succession not given by the laying on of hands, not ecclesiastical or organic, a succession spiritual, a succession of inheritance of the spirit. If a man is to do his work as a Christian minister, he must be a man of God as the old prophets were men of God; he must interpret him, not reflect the sentiments of his community; he must receive into himself the message which God gives him and make it a part of his life; he must make that consciousness of his message the secret and source of his power, and give it forth with the spiritual vitality

[1] Jer. xxxii, 2–5; xxxiii, 1–3; Acts xxii, 30–39.

which comes only from an experience of God's love, in faith and hope; he must make it a practical message, dealing with the actual scenes, the actual struggles, the actual life of the people of this twentieth century; and he must have the foresight that comes from insight; he must dare march forward; he must be a leader in that great movement the end of which is the kingdom of God, the power of which is the power of God, and the ministers to which must be ministers of God.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST: HIS METHODS

In this and the succeeding chapter I purpose to consider what light the example and teachings of Jesus Christ throw upon the subject which the reader has been invited to examine with me in this volume, namely, the true methods of the Christian ministry and the secret of its power. Even those who do not accept Jesus Christ as a Master whose example and instruction possess a divine authority, may yet well think him the greatest religious teacher the world has ever seen, and his methods and spirit therefore worthy of the most thorough and reverent study. He "has founded absolute religion," Ernest Renan says. "The genius of nineteen coming centuries," Goldwin Smith calls him.[1] In this chapter I ask the reader to consider the methods, in the next chapter the substance of the teaching of this founder of absolute religion, this genius of nineteen coming centuries.

[1] "Pure Christianity still presents itself, after eighteen centuries, in the character of a universal and eternal religion. . . . The foundation of true religion is verily his (Christ's) work. . . . All that may be attempted outside this grand and noble Christian tradition will be sterile. . . . Jesus, on the other hand, has founded

In entering upon this theme three cautions are necessary.

1. No man can fully understand or adequately interpret Jesus Christ; certainly I do not assume so to do. To me he is the supreme revelation in the terms of a human experience of the Infinite and the Eternal, the inspirer and the ideal for all men and for all ages; for the first century and the twentieth century, for men and for women, for the Occidental and for the Oriental, for the prince and for the peasant, for the philosopher and for the unlearned, for the aged and for the schoolboy, for the poet and for the man of affairs, for the merchant, the mechanic, the farmer, the soldier, the lawyer, the statesman, — in short, for men of every temperament, every vocation, and every type of character. Of course he who believes this cannot believe himself capable of furnishing an adequate interpretation of Jesus Christ. All that he can hope or even desire to do is to give one man's view of Christ. Even that view it would be impossible for me adequately to present within the limits of these two chapters. For half a century I have been try-

absolute religion." — Renan: *The Life of Jesus*, pp. 410, 411. "The Founder of Christendom, having no home of his own wherein to lay his head, goes to find shelter for the night beneath some disciple's lonely roof. Little did the owner of that roof dream that it was receiving as a guest the genius of nineteen coming centuries; perhaps of the whole future of humanity, unless the Spiritual as well as the Supernatural is doomed, and science is henceforth to reign alone." — Goldwin Smith: *The Founder of Christendom*, p. 44.

ing to apply the precepts of Christ to the various problems of life, individual and social, and to learn myself, and teach others, how the spirit of Christ carried into life will make it harmonious, hopeful, joyous, divine. I should be sorry to think that I could put into a few pages the entire product of fifty years of serious thinking.

2. It must be remembered, also, that we have no biography of Jesus Christ; we have only memorabilia. They do not afford a continuous history of his life, nor represent any attempt to trace out the development of his doctrine, or his own intellectual or spiritual growth. Of the thirty-three years of his life we have, excepting for the account of his birth and one incident in his boyhood, only the record of three years, and this record only in fragmentary reports. In the study of these reports there is constant danger, on the one hand, of drawing too large deductions from slight premises, of reading into Christ's life and teachings our own prejudices and making him sponsor for our own thoughts; on the other hand, danger of passing carelessly by incidents and sayings which have in them matter worthy of our careful attention. To preserve the golden mean between these two dangers is difficult, perhaps impossible.

3. We have also to bear in mind that not even the example and teaching of Jesus Christ are to be blindly followed. Jesus Christ did not teach in order that he might serve as a substitute for think-

ing, but that he might inspire us to think. We need not take the Lord's Supper in an upper chamber because he took it in an upper chamber, or reclining because he reclined, or think that we may not be married because he was unmarried, or that our ministry must be an itinerant ministry because he was not settled over a parish. We follow a great leader, not by thinking his thoughts over again, or doing again the deeds he did, — we follow him by carrying into our own age the spirit which he carried into his, and applying to our own circumstances the principles which he applied to the circumstances of his life. To understand Christ's principles, to appreciate Christ's spirit, and then to apply those principles and exemplify that spirit in our own life — this is to follow Christ.

With these preliminary cautions borne in mind, I ask the reader to consider with me in this and the succeeding chapter what were the methods of Christ as a preacher, what was the secret of his power, and what was the substance of his teaching, hoping that the hints given in these chapters may incite the reader to make a life study of the Four Gospels for himself, in an endeavor to secure more satisfactory answers to these questions.

Certain negative conclusions respecting Christ's method seem very evident.

He did not depend for his power on dramatic effects. He did not act upon the counsel of Demosthenes, who declared that action was the first,

the second, and the third condition of oratory. He did not seek to win the attention of the people by any form of dramatic art or artifice. John B. Gough portrayed in action and in dialect every character he described, and acted upon the platform every incident he narrated. Henry Ward Beecher, with unconscious skill, imitated every act which he used in illustration. We can be quite sure that this was not Christ's method, because he habitually taught sitting down. He went into the synagogue at Nazareth to preach, the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he "sat down" to preach to them. He went into the mountain, the multitudes followed him to listen to his inaugural sermon, and "when he was set" he opened his mouth and taught them. He came into the temple, all the people came unto him, "and he sat down and taught them." The people pressed upon him at the lake of Gennesaret, and he entered into a boat, and thrust it out a little from the land, and "sat down and taught the people out of the boat."[1]

Nor did he move them by the oratorical splendor of his addresses. These addresses had none of the literary characteristics of great orations. They were not musical; there are no cadences in them. They were not made splendid by beautiful ornamentation; they are without rich coloring. They were without striking introductions to attract at-

[1] Luke iv, 20; Matt. v, 1; John viii, 2; Luke v, 3.

tention, and without eloquent peroration to win applause; indeed, one can hardly think of them as having ever been received with applause. With very few exceptions they were not aflame with passion. They were simple in style as in substance, spontaneous, unartificial, practical and instructional rather than imaginative and emotional. No schoolboy wishing to find a fit piece of literature for a declamation would think of looking among Christ's discourses for a suitable oration for oratorical display. Christ's discourses are not declamatory, they are not oratorical, they neither surge with passion nor scintillate with antithesis nor sparkle with wit and humor. No teacher of rhetoric would go to them except for examples of lucidity and simplicity. They are simple, conversational, almost colloquial.

Nor was the power of Jesus Christ, primarily, intellectual. The interest which he aroused was not dependent on skillful analysis and dialectical skill. He did not play before men a game of chess, setting thought against thought with check and countercheck, while men looked on to see how the game would end. There is very little of the kind of intellectual interest in reading the discourses of Jesus Christ which the scholar finds in reading the dialogues of Plato. A profound philosophy of life underlies his teaching, but his teaching is not the exhibition or unfolding of a system of philosophy. There is little in common in the *method* of the

teaching between Jesus Christ and Hegel or Kant or Calvin or Edwards.[1]

Most of his teaching was conversational; some scholars think it was all conversational. Probably it was largely fragmentary; certainly it comes to us in fragmentary reports. It is mainly colloquial — talk with men, rather than addresses to men. Christ receives their inquiries and gives his reply, or seeks their responses to his own inquiries. It is often dialogue in fact, when it is not so in form, — an interchange of thought with thought, of life with life. On even the most conservative interpretation of the Gospels, there are not more than five discourses that can properly be called sermons, of which we have any report in the Gospels. These are the sermon at Nazareth, the Sermon on the Mount, the parables at the seashore, the sermon on the Bread of Life, and the Discourse on the Last Day.[2] The parables by the seashore I believe to have been given on different occasions, though at the same period of his ministry; the other sermons above referred to I believe to be real discourses, not merely collections of apothegmatic sayings; but upon this point scholars are not agreed.

And yet, while he taught in conversational forms, and in apparently fragmentary utterances, he dealt with the greatest problems of human life.

[1] But see further on this aspect of his teaching, post, pp. 262–264.

[2] Luke iv, 16–32; Matt. v, vi, vii; Luke vi, 17–49; John vi, 25–71; Matt. xxiv.

The questions which he discussed are such as these: What is the object of life? That question he answers in the sermon at Nazareth. We are here to serve one another, to lift men up, to comfort, to console, to illumine, to instruct, to redeem; not to be ministered unto, but to minister. What is the secret of happiness? That question he answers in the Sermon on the Mount. Character is the secret of happiness. Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers. Not what we have but what we are determines our happiness. What is the secret of character? How shall I possess a holiness (or wholeness or healthfulness) that will make me blessed? That question he answers in the sermon on the bread of life. The secret is communion with God, fellowship with him, feeding upon him, making him the substance of our life, the nourishment of our soul. What is the destiny of man, the issue of life, the outcome of this great drama of history of which we are a part? That he answers in his Discourse on the Last Day. It is the revelation of God, such a revelation that the deaf will hear, the blind will see, the dull will recognize.

Or turn from these discourses to his conversations. These also are on great themes. Nicodemus comes to him by night. "Rabbi," he says, "we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Christ instantly turns

the conversation into a new channel. It is not, he tells him, a right opinion about miracles, nor a right opinion about myself that you need; you need a new life coming down from above. He talks with the woman at the well, and from a simple request for a drink of water turns the conversation into one of the profoundest discourses respecting the nature and source of spiritual life.[1] Or, from the conversations, turn to his parables. They are never mere dramatic pictures to catch the attention and arouse the interest for the moment; they are interpretations of great spiritual truths. In the parables of the Good Samaritan and Dives and Lazarus, he exhibits the true test of character; in the parable of the Prodigal Son he exhibits the difference between the holiness that forgives sin and the holiness that only hates and resents it; in the parable of the publican and the Pharisee, the difference between the holiness that is satisfied with past achievement and that which aspires to a worthier future.[2]

Though in form fragmentary, in fact Christ's teaching was systematic. It may be true that "Jesus, so far as we can conclude from our sources, has never aimed in any single discourse or any group of connected discourses at laying down his doctrine in systematic form;"[3] certainly his teach-

[1] John iii, 1–12, iv, 1–30.

[2] Luke x, 25–37, xvi, 19–31, xv, 11–32, xviii, 10–14.

[3] Wendt: *The Teaching of Jesus*, p. 107.

ing is in its form the farthest possible removed from the systematic theology of a Calvin, an Edwards, a Park, or a Hodge; but underlying his teaching is a system. He does not formulate it, but it exists. He presents no isolated truths, half thought out; every truth which he presents runs its roots down and finds connection with every other truth. For nineteen centuries his disciples have been studying his teachings; they have gotten some doctrines out of his teachings which are not there, and they have, doubtless, failed to get some doctrines out of his teachings which are there; but, despite their conflicting prepossessions and temperaments, they have agreed in finding certain great fundamental truths in his ministry. Roman Catholic and Protestant, Calvinist and Arminian, Episcopalian and Congregationalist, orthodox and heterodox, bitterly as they have fought one another on certain questions of doctrine, heartily agree with one another in certain fundamental faiths. They could not have thus agreed in discovering a system underlying the teachings of Jesus Christ if no system was there. Imperfectly understood by his disciples, imperfectly reported by them, constantly misinterpreted since, used by combatants as an arsenal for weapons of offense or defense, sharply criticised by skeptics of every type in all ages of the world, the teaching of Jesus Christ is more universally honored, more profoundly reverenced, and on the whole more loyally followed than

ever before in the world's history. This could not be if it had not unity. Teaching which is but a series of *disjecta membra* could possess no such immortality.

But it was not the object of Jesus Christ to exhibit or maintain a system. He did not teach for the purpose of inculcating a philosophy; it was not his aim to found a school of thought. Still less did he seek to give specific rules for the regulation of conduct; it was not his aim to found a school of ethics. Both truth and rules of conduct were instrumental; the end of all his teaching was the production of character. Thus, his preaching was not in form philosophical or ethical; it was vital, and aimed at changing the sources of life, that is, at changing the character, not merely at the formation of opinions or the regulation of conduct. He therefore never measured men by their ecclesiastical practices, their intellectual opinions, or their emotional states. He never asked them whether they went to church, or what they believed, or how they felt. He never portrayed men as good because of their ecclesiastical practices or the orthodoxy of their opinions or the excitation of their emotions. He never portrayed them as bad because they did not conform to ecclesiastical rules or orthodox standards, or did not possess prescribed emotions. His measurements of men were always real, practical, vital; character was the end of his teaching, conduct was his measure of character.

His preaching, therefore, is concrete. His illustrations are never mere ornaments, introduced to relieve a wearied audience or lighten the strain upon their attention; they are concrete expressions of vital truth; and the only truths with which he concerns himself are those capable of concrete interpretation. An abstract truth which exists only in the realm of pure intellect has apparently for Jesus Christ no interest; it certainly has no place in his teaching. The only Christianity which Jesus Christ inculcated was applied Christianity.

Seeking thus to change the sources of character, he seeks to make men think for themselves, answer their own questions, or ask questions of themselves which they had not thought to ask before. A lawyer asks him, "Who is my neighbor?" Christ tells him the story of the good Samaritan, and then returns his question to him, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among thieves?" He tells the story of two sons, one of whom promised to work in his father's vineyard but did no work, the other of whom refused to work in his father's vineyard and repented and went to work, and then puts to his auditors the question, "Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" A young man comes running in his eagerness, kneels to him reverently, and in words acknowledging his authority says, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ throws him back upon himself: What do you

mean by "good Master"? Why do you call me good? and the young man is silent; he has used the phrase without significance.[1] This method is characteristic with Christ. He seeks by concrete statement, by parabolic illustration, by searching question, to get behind the intellectual conception, behind the ethical rule, behind the ecclesiastical formulary, into the very springs and sources of man's being.

This combination of profundity of thought and concreteness of statement gives his sayings a hidden meaning. His thoughts are seed thoughts. His teaching abounds in epigrams. Whole systems of truth lie concealed in them. "I say unto you, Love your enemies" has in it the secret of the Christian system of penology. The function of society is not to punish but to redeem the enemies of society. "Say, Our Father" has in it a complete system of theology. What true fatherhood means to us on earth interprets the relationship of God to humanity. "Take my yoke upon you" contains the whole secret of human development. Yoke yourself to God and your work is easy. This is the secret of civilization, — that we have learned how in the natural realm to avail ourselves of the divine forces in nature and work coöperatively with them. This is the secret of Christian development, which we shall have acquired when we have learned how to enter into spiritual companionship with God and work in the spiritual realm coöperatively with him.

[1] Luke x, 36; Matt. xxi, 31, xviii, 17.

This compacting of fundamental principles of life into brief and pregnant aphorisms gives great crispness of style to the teachings of Jesus. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you." "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first." "Many are called but few are chosen." "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The teachings of Jesus abound with aphorisms of this description.[1] They constitute more than a characteristic of style, they are evidences of profoundness of thought and carefulness of preparation. Such coin as these are not minted without study of form as well as of substance, of expression as well as of truth. It is for the preacher to ponder these aphoristic sentences, meditate upon them, search for the truth which is contained in them, study the life that is about him, and by this combined study learn how to apply the truths concealed in these aphorisms to the circumstances and conditions of modern life.

There are also certain elements in Christ's life which bear directly on his teaching, and which, in any consideration of him as a teacher, must be taken account of.

First is his industry. Judged simply as other

[1] Matt. vii, 2, xix, 30, xx, 16, xxiii, 11; Mark ii, 27; Acts xx, 35. Wendt, in *The Teaching of Jesus*, gives three pages of sayings of this description, vol. i, pp. 139–142.

men are judged, it is safe to say that no man in the history of the human race has accomplished anything commensurable with what Jesus Christ accomplished in the three years into which his life ministry was condensed. But his habits of industry antedated his public ministry. He began life working as a carpenter at his father's bench. His appreciation of nature, his familiarity with the Bible, and his profound knowledge of life, all indicate a thoughtful boyhood. In the beginning of his ministry he gathered workingmen about him, and from them chose his apostles. An itinerant ministry was his, and his journeys were all performed on foot; he walked hundreds of miles in the course of his life. Mark has given us the story of one of his days.[1] It was a typical day; multiplied, it affords a picture of his busy life. It is said of him at one period of his ministry that he had not time so much as to eat.[2] And his work was of a kind that exhausts men; and it exhausted him. Virtue went out of him, it is said.[3] He was so worn by the calls upon his sympathies that bystanders looking on him said to one another, We see now what the prophet meant when he said of the Messiah, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."[4] These evidences of his industry lie on the surface of his life. But as the greater part of an iceberg lies below the

[1] Mark i, 21–45.
[2] Mark vi, 31, iii, 20; Matt. viii, 20.
[3] Luke vi, 19, viii, 46; Mark v, 30.
[4] Matt. viii, 17.

water line, so the greater part and the best part of a teacher's industry lies out of the world's sight. Christ could not have taught the truths he taught without much time given to meditating; he could not have been the master of the Hebrew literature, not of its words only, but of its inner spiritual meaning, without much study of that literature; and he could not have thrown out those aphoristic sentences that sparkle like diamonds, those perfectly wrought parables, profound in the truth they reveal, perfect in the lucidity and simplicity of the form in which it is revealed, without much study expended both upon the substance and the expression.

As a teacher he was free, unconstrained, unconventional. He neither resented the conventions of his time nor submitted to them. He used them when they were useful; he disregarded them when they interfered with his work. He preached in the synagogues as long as the synagogues would permit him to do so. The fact that his teaching was revolutionary of the religious opinions of the rulers of the synagogues did not deter him from using their pulpits so long as their pulpits were open to him. When the rulers thought to prevent his preaching by prohibiting him the only recognized religious gathering-place of the time, he found other places in which to preach. A house, a field, a shore, a hillside served as a synagogue; a seat, a stone, the prow of a boat, served as a pulpit. And he never waited for a congregation. Sometimes he talked to a

single woman coming to the well to draw water; sometimes to a houseful, while others crowded about the doors and the windows; sometimes to a group of fishermen casually on the shore of the lake; sometimes to the crowds passing and repassing in the outer court of the Temple at Jerusalem; sometimes to thousands who had flocked from the villages to hear him on some plain among the hills of Galilee. Any soul served as a congregation, any spot as a church, any opportunity as a sacred occasion.[1]

The reason for this it is easy to see: he had a mission to fulfill, a message to deliver. After a day of ministry his friends find him in his retreat, and desire to bring him back to enjoy the sweets of popularity. He refuses. "Let us go into the next towns," he says, "that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth." His message was the expression of his own life, and its expression was necessary to him. He foresees what it will cost, not to him only, but to his friends and to the world, and he shrinks from these consequences, yet he cannot, will not draw back. "I am come to send fire on the earth," he says: "and what will I if it be already kindled? I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The message has been given to him by his Father, and he cannot be still. "The words that I speak unto you," he says, "I speak not of

[1] John iv, 6, 7; Mark ii, 1, 2; Luke v, 1-3, xx. 1; Matt. vi, 1.

myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." The mission is one which has been laid upon him; and he cannot lay it down until he can say to his Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." [1]

Because his message was the expression of his life it was emphasized by his life. His actions interpreted his words. "I am," he said, "the way, the truth, and the life." [2] He bade his disciples take no thought for the morrow. He took none. When the multitude was hungry, he asked what provisions the little band had provided for their own use, as one who had given himself no concern before upon the subject, then gave it all away to the throng who attended his ministry, in seeming oblivion of his own needs, in real trust in the Father who cares for the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field. He bade his disciples love their enemies and pray for those who despitefully used them. His enemies he loved. His last words to the disciple who betrayed him were pathetic words of friendly reproach, — a final effort to save the traitor from his self-destruction, and not in vain, since they awakened a remorse that we may at least hope was the beginning of a true repentance.[3] Among his last words was a prayer for the forgiveness of those who crucified

[1] Mark i, 38; Luke xii, 49, 50; John xiv, 10, xvii, 4.

[2] John xiv, 6.

[3] Mark vi, 34–41; Matt. v, 44, vi, 25–31; Luke xxii, 48, xxiii, 34.

him. Thus Christ lived as he preached, because he preached what he was, — no reporter of other men's thoughts, no repeater of other men's faiths was he, but the exponent of his own innermost, sacred, divine life.

This inner life of his, compelling his lips to utter and his hands to do, inspired a courage which halted at no danger and hesitated at no obstacle. I send you forth, he said to his apostles, as sheep in the midst of wolves; be wise; be harmless, but fear not. Going himself as a sheep in the midst of wolves, neither courting danger nor avoiding it, he never feared. In vain his mother and his brethren endeavored to dissuade him from the seemingly unequal contest into which he had entered with the ruling powers of his time. In vain his disciples warned him of the danger of his death and besought him to avoid it. History affords no more dramatic illustration of heroism than is afforded by his going up to Jerusalem to his passion, with the shame and spitting, the betrayal, the mock trial, the angry mob, the crucifixion all before him; and there in the Temple courts challenging the Scribes and Pharisees with an invective against their false religious pretense covering evil hearts and evil deeds, as a whited sepulchre covers "dead men's bones and all uncleanness." Yet parallel to it is that other scarcely less dramatic incident in the beginning of his life, when he turned the applause of his Nazarene congregation into murderous hate by his

rebuke of the national sin of provincial pride and narrowness.[1]

Of the essential spirit of his ministry — its spirit of self-control surpassing all asceticism, its spirit of conscience surpassing all Puritanism, its spirit of piety surpassing all mysticism, its spirit of hopefulness surpassing all optimism — I shall speak in the next chapter. Yet the most important characteristic in the method of his ministry would be ignored if I were to pass by in silence his habit of retreating from time to time, not only from the crowd but from his nearest and most intimate friends, to be alone with himself and his God. "When thou prayest," he said to his disciples, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." His closet was sometimes the wild eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, sometimes a recess high up among the hills, sometimes a garden in the environs of Jerusalem.[2] Eager as he was to help men, thronged as he was by men eager for his help, with a work too large to be accomplished in a lifetime, and a life too short for anything but the merest beginning of that work, yet he never was so busy that he could not get away from men for hours whose occupation is hidden from our vision, and can be interpreted only by our experience. How intimate

[1] Matt. x, 16; Mark iii, 21, 31-35, viii, 31-33, x, 32; John xi, 16; Matt. xxiii, 13–39; Luke iv, 16–32.

[2] Matt. vi, 6; Luke v, 16, vi, 12; Mark i, 35, xiv, 32–35.

was his companionship with his Father in those hours, how far back into the ages which preceded his birth that companionship may have reached, it is not for us to know. But this we may surely know, — that we who are trying to do Christ's work in Christ's way, whose aspiration it is to emulate his industry, his freedom, his spontaneity, his reality, his courage, his self-control, his conscientiousness, his piety, and his hopefulness, must have our hours of solitude that are also hours of most intimate companionship, our hours of silence and repose, given not to study, not even to petition, but to that communion which can neither be analyzed nor described, hours when perhaps our only prayer is, Speak, Lord, for thy servant is listening, and perhaps the only answer we hear is, Be still and know that I am God.

# CHAPTER X

## THE MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST: THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS TEACHING

THERE have been many attempts to formulate the teaching of Jesus Christ. Of these the earliest is that contained in the Epistle to Titus: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." [1] This summary of Christ's teaching may certainly be taken as an indication of the opinions respecting that teaching entertained by the Apostolic Church, and it is clear from this summary that the Early Church thought of Christ as a systematic teacher, or, at least, as a teacher of truths which could be systematized, and which, being systematized, proved to be comprehensive and complete, covering all the categories of human experience. For man stands in four relations in his life involving ethical obligation, and only in four. First, in a relation to a material universe, and to his body, which is a part of that

[1] Titus ii, 11–13.

material universe, through which he comes in contact with the world outside. Second, in a relation to his fellow men, that is, to human society. Third, in a relation to God. Fourth, in a relation to the future. These four include all the possible categories of experience: relation to the material world, relation to his fellow men, relation to God, and relation to the future. We stand, it is true, in a certain relation to the past; but we cannot change it, and therefore it is not a relation which affects our duty. What the Epistle to Titus declares is that Jesus Christ has taught how we should live in these four relations. He has taught us what are our ethical relations to the physical world, to our fellow men, to God, and to the future.

It is also clear that in the Apostolic age the teaching of Jesus Christ was regarded as vital and practical rather than as philosophical and theological. He taught the practical art of living rather than any abstract theory of life. If one had asked the primitive Church, in the second century, what Jesus came to teach, he would probably have been answered in the words of the Apostles' Creed. He would have been told that the essence of Christianity lies in certain historic facts. If one had asked a couple of centuries later what was the epitome of Christ's teaching, the answer would have been in the words of the Nicene Creed, that Jesus Christ is "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance

with the Father," in other words, that the essence of Christianity consists in certain beliefs respecting the relationship which Jesus Christ bears to the Eternal and the Infinite. If one had asked the Christians of the sixteenth century, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, they would have presented in reply certain theories of the universe as constituting the essence of Christianity. We find them to-day embodied in the Creed of Pius IV, in the Westminster Confession of Faith, or in the Thirty-nine Articles. But in this earliest summary of Christ's instruction he is represented as teaching, not what we should think, but how we should live. There is nothing in this epitome concerning theological or other opinions. It concerns itself wholly with life. Jesus Christ has come to teach us that we should live soberly, righteously, godly, and hopefully in this present world.

I. What does Jesus Christ mean by soberly?

In the first century the condition of the world was that of gross animalism. Wealth was concentrated in the hands of a very few. At least half the world were slaves, and of the other half the great majority lived in abject poverty. At the same time a few lived in the possession of wealth so great that they knew not what to do with it. The result was a state of dissipation and degradation almost incredible in our times. The world was ransacked for materials to add to the gratification of the body. From two hundred thousand dollars to four hundred

thousand dollars were sometimes spent on a single banquet. It is said of one man that he spent four millions of dollars in luxurious eating and drinking, and then committed suicide because he had only four hundred thousand dollars between himself and starvation. The feasts lasted for days, often for a week. Sometimes a governor was appointed, who required men to drink their due quota of wine. The grossness of indulgence in animal passion was such that it is impossible to describe it in explicit terms in such a volume as this.

Such a state of affairs called for reform, and there were those who proposed reform. There grew up sects which declared that all animal pleasure was shameful, degrading, sinful. In Rome were the Stoics, who claimed that pleasure was always degrading. In Palestine were the Pharisees and the Essenes, who, in different forms, made the same claim. The Pharisees were the Puritans of the first century. They were the separatists. They lived in the world, mixed with the world, made money, went to feasts, had fine houses, wore fine clothes; but they held that religion was apart from this life. When they feasted, they were not religious; to be religious they fasted. They were not religious when they lived in fine clothes; to be religious they took off their fine clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. Religion consisted in separating themselves from the enjoyments in which for most of the time they indulged. The Essenes were more consistent, if

less practical. They separated themselves from the world; lived away from the towns where the temptations were great; gathered in little villages or in settlements in the desert; forbade, it is said, though this is doubtful, all use of meat and of wine; certainly forbade all marriage. They cut themselves off from everything in life from which it was possible to cut themselves off, and still maintain an existence.

This, broadly speaking, was the condition of the world when Jesus came into it, — on the one hand, men giving themselves up to unbridled lust and appetite, without restraint of any kind; on the other hand, men saying, All indulgence in pleasure is irreligious, and to be religious we will take certain times for denial of the body, or, more consistently, saying, We will deny the body entirely as far as we can do so and still keep soul and body together.

It would not be difficult to find in our own time parallels to both these classes. On the one hand, there are men and women — a few, though not so many now as there were in the Middle Ages — who hold that the highest religion requires that we should separate ourselves from the world altogether; there are many more who hold that religion consists in cutting off certain things which they characterize as worldly. It is irreligious to play cards, but not to play dominoes; to play billiards, but not to play croquet; to go to the theatre, but not to witness

tableaux. A line is drawn; all on one side of the line is wrong, all on the other side of the line is right. There is more than one man who eats poor pastry and drinks strong coffee until his flesh is as flabby as the one and his skin as yellow as the other, and yet thinks that he is a temperance man because he does not drink beer. Such men conceive that religion requires us to put certain things in packages and write "prohibited" on them, and certain other things in packages and write "permitted" on them.

Jesus Christ did not accept any such notion. He came into the world, and in the world lived as a man among men. He was no ascetic. His first miracle was making wine at a wedding, simply to add to the festivities of that joyous occasion. He continued throughout his life in the same spirit. The sect of Essenes, who separated themselves from the world, he did not join. John the Baptist, as a protest against the sensuality of his time, went into the wilderness and lived there on locusts and wild honey. Jesus pursued the opposite course. John, he said, came neither eating nor drinking; the Son of man came eating and drinking. It is not recorded that in the history of his life he ever declined an invitation to a feast. Sometimes it was given to him by the rich, sometimes by the poor, sometimes by a Pharisee, sometimes by a publican; but whoever gave it, he went. He accepted the common pleasures of life, and was not prevented

from so doing by the fear that his example would be misinterpreted. It was misinterpreted: because he came eating and drinking, men said of him that he was a wine-bibber and a glutton; they lied, but still he went on eating and drinking as before.[1]

And what he did he advised others to do. Again and again he portrayed a great feast to illustrate the kingdom of God. He never spoke of dancing with displeasure, and more than once with apparent commendation. He spoke of the sports and games of the children in the market-place with apparent approbation. He told the story of a boy who had wandered off into a far country, and come back after his experience with the harlots, footsore, ragged, unkempt, poverty-stricken, and when his father received him it was to music and dancing and a feast. Paul, in one of his letters, tells us in a phrase which has been often misquoted and misinterpreted what he thinks the spirit and teaching of Christ embody on this subject. "Wherefore," Paul says, "if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, [such as] Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men?" "Touch not, taste not, handle not"! How often that has been quoted as though that were the law laid down by Christianity! Paul

[1] John ii, 1–11; Matt. xi, 18, 19; Luke vii, 36, xi, 37, xiv, 1, xix, 2–5; Matt. ix, 10, xxvi, 6, 7.

quotes it from pagan literature, and says to Christians: You are free from that law if you are a follower of Christ. You are to touch, you are to taste, you are to handle; the world is yours. That is the first teaching of Christ.[1]

But while Christ was not prevented from taking the innocent pleasures of the world even by the misrepresentation and abuse which resulted from it, his happiness did not depend on what we call pleasure, — on fine clothes, fine houses, fine food, or anything that ministers merely to the body. He took these things if they came; he left them alone if they did not come; but he did not care. A man said to him once, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest; he said, Will you? Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests; I have not where to lay my head. He went to all sorts of feasts provided for him, but the food that he provided for himself was apparently of the simplest kind. One incident tells us what it was. A great crowd listened all day long; they were hungry; Christ wished to feed them. He turns to his disciples: What provision have we? Five crackers and two little fishes — like our sardines — the humblest food of the peasants. This was his food. He lived a poor man, and poverty did not trouble him. He depended on the charity of men for his livelihood while he taught them, and he told his disciples to do the same. When he sent them forth, he said, Take no money

[1] Matt. xi, 16, 17; Luke xv, 25; Col. ii, 20-23.

in your purse; depend on what men will give to you. Once he came out from Jerusalem and stopped at the house of a friend. There were two sisters. One of them was interested in his teaching, and sat at his feet, listening to him; the other bustled about the house to get a great supper for him. When the busy sister called on him to send her sister to help her he refused. He preferred the listening pupil to the too busy housekeeper. He would rather teach than eat. He and his disciples had no servant. Once when they came in from a long walk, tired, footsore, with soiled feet, — they wore no shoes and stockings in those days, and therefore men washed their feet as we wash our hands before meals, — and there was no one to do this for them, he poured the water into the basin and washed their feet himself.[1]

He was no Stoic, but he was no epicure; he was no Pharisee, but he was no Sadducee; he was no Puritan, but he was no Cavalier. He did not depend for his happiness on the things the world gives, and he told his disciples not to depend on them. Happiness, he said to them, is a disposition, not a condition. Men are happy according to what they are, not according to what they have. Blessedness depends on character, not on possession; on what you are, not on what you have; on how you live, not on where you live. The true man is independent of his possessions. This was his teaching, and it was

[1] Matt. viii, 20, xiv, 16, 17; Luke x, 4–11, 38–40; John xiii, 1–5.

taught by him in his life as well as by his words. He lived it as well as taught it. Sobriety with him did not mean cutting off certain things and allowing himself certain other things; it meant counting all things as his if he chose to use them, and yet not depending for his pleasure on them.

For sobriety involved, in the second place, the fundamental principle that things are for men, not men for things. This principle had been announced by an unknown Hebrew prophet in that wonderful poem which describes the creation of the world. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."[1] All things are made for man, — all material things, all animal things, — made that they may be the servitors of man, that they may make him happier and wiser and better. All animals are his servants, and the animal nature that is a part of him is no less his servant. The animal in the man is made to serve that which is higher than the animal in the man, as all external things are made to serve him. This was a fundamental principle both in the teaching and in the living of Jesus. All material things outside and all material things

[1] Gen. i, 27, 28.

within the man himself are made for the intellectual, the moral, the spiritual, the immaterial. The lower must serve the higher.

When he saw a man who did not understand this principle, and who thought there was joy in the simple possession of things, he called him — for sometimes he spoke in very plain language — a fool. He told the story of a man who, having filled his barns to bursting, said, What shall I do? I have no more barns to dispose of my goods. I will build greater barns, and put my harvests in the greater barns, and I will say to myself, Eat, drink, and be merry. And then Jesus said, God called to him, Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee. A man who cannot think of anything better to do with things than to fill his house with them, and then build another house and fill that with them, and then a third house and fill that with them, Jesus calls a fool. And there are a great many such fools in America. He put this truth again explicitly in a question which it will be well for Americans to ponder: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own life?"[2] The world is made for life, and if a man exchanges his life for the world, what does he gain? Yet there is many a man who does exactly this. He can purchase pictures in France or Germany or England, and pay what prices he will, but he has no eyes for

[2] Luke xii, 16–21; Matt. xvi, 26. This is the meaning of the Greek word "soul."

art. He can buy libraries, and with them make beautiful wall-paper for his rooms, but the only books he cares for are the ledger and the day-book. He has money which will enable him to put all the luxuries of all the markets on his table, and a digestion which forbids him to eat any of them. He has lost his life in gaining things. In our American world are many such men.

In contrast with such living, common now, almost universal then, Jesus said, Things are for men, not men for things. His first affirmation is, Your happiness does not depend upon what you have, but upon what you are; his second, Things are for you, not you for things. To live soberly according to the example and teaching of Jesus Christ is to live under the guidance and inspiration of these two simple and fundamental principles. It is not to put certain things on one side and say, I will not take those, and certain things on the other side and say, I will take those, — it is to say, I will take everything that will help me to be a better man, and nothing that will not help me to be a better man.

There are three conceptions possible respecting our relation to the material world. First: that we should give ourselves up to the enjoyment of it: let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die. Rome did that, and Rome died; and the land that had given a Cicero, a Cæsar, a Tacitus, a Sallust, a Virgil, lay for centuries dead, killed by its own self-indulgence. The second is, to shut one's self off

from the world, and shut off all those things in the world that bring what we call pleasure. The Puritans tried this plan. They broke the glass windows in the cathedrals, destroyed the statues, tore down the pictures from the walls, prohibited the novel, shut the door of the theatre. But all that they abolished came back again: the stained-glass windows are in Puritan churches; the statues are restored to the niches; the pictures are on the walls; the theatre doors are wide open; the novel is here to stay. The third method is the method of consecration. It is the method of one who says, Whatever I can use to make myself, my family, my world wiser, better, happier, I will enjoy; and what I cannot so use I will prohibit to myself. This was the method which Christ urged alike by his precept and example. Soberly, as interpreted by Christ, means the free use of all things in the service and for the upbuilding of the spirit. It is interpreted by Paul in his declaration to the Corinthians, "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."[1] All teachers, all material things, all activities, present and future, all belong to us, to use as Christ used them, in loyalty to God and in the service of our fellow men.

II. What does Jesus Christ mean by righteously?

[1] 1 Cor. iii, 21-23.

What did he teach concerning the right relation of man to his fellow men?

In interpreting the teaching of Jesus Christ we ought not to forget, as we are too apt to do, that he was a Jew and primarily a teacher to Jews, and that he assumed as the basis of his teaching the fundamental faiths held and inculcated by the Hebrew prophets. And fundamental to their teaching was the doctrine that God is a righteous God; that he demands righteousness of his children, and demands nothing else; that the one thing that arouses his anger is man's inhumanity to man; that the one way to please him is for man to serve his fellow man. It is true that there had grown up in Judaism an elaborate sacrificial system, a great temple, and a great priesthood; but this sacrificial system, with its priesthood and its temple, was not essential to the Hebrew religion. That it was not is evident from two facts: first, that, as modern scholars have abundantly shown, this system did not exist in anything like the form in which we now find it in the Old Testament until the fifth or sixth century before Christ; second, that with the destruction of Jerusalem, seventy years after the birth of Christ, the temple, the sacrificial system, and the priesthood disappeared. No Jew now offers sacrifices, no Jew now recognizes a priesthood, and yet the religion of the Hebrew people remains to-day fundamentally what it was fifteen hundred years before Christ. Jesus Christ has himself given a summary of the

Hebrew religion, as it is to be found in the writings of its great law-giver and the subsequent prophets: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." [1] All the law and all the prophets are the development and application of these two principles, or this twofold spirit.

In thus summarizing the Hebrew law and prophets Jesus summarized his own reply to the question, What is righteousness? In his first sermon at Nazareth, in defining his mission in the terms of an ancient Hebrew prophet, he significantly ignored all ecclesiastical requirements, and summed up the object of his mission in terms of helpfulness to suffering humanity. His mission, he said, was to bring glad tidings to the poor, healing to the broken-hearted, deliverance to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty to the bruised. When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to ask if Jesus was the Messiah, this work of help and healing was the only evidence of his Messiahship which he offered: "Tell John," he said, "what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the glad tidings are preached." [2]

Christ's whole ministry is in harmony with this

[1] Matt. xxii, 35–40. [2] Luke iv, 16–19, vii, 19–23.

teaching. In his parables he portrayed, as his ideals of the religion which he taught, not characters famous for devoutness or theological lore or mystical faith, — he portrayed men who, living common lives, lived them on the plane of a high and noble morality. The farmer who was diligently sowing seed; the father who received back into his arms the wayward son; the man who, having found the pearl of great price, did not put it in his pocket, but looked for the owner and sold all that he had in order that he might buy it honestly; the steward who administered a great estate fairly for his lord, and was ready to return a good account of it when the time of administration had passed, — such were the men Christ held up before his disciples as his conception of religious men. To illustrate this principle he told a story which has often been misunderstood because the emphasis of it has been disregarded. He assumed the common belief of his time in a future hell and a future heaven. According to that belief, to hell the heathen and the heretics and the publicans and sinners were sent. Christ told the story of two men, one of whom fared sumptuously every day and was clothed in purple and fine linen, and, so far as the account went, did no harm to any one — simply did no good, leaving the poor man to suffer at his door, while the dogs licked his sores. And Christ said that this is the kind of man who is to go to hell, the man who leaves suffering and trouble and sorrow unrelieved in the world when he

has power to relieve it. Once, and only once, he drew a picture of the judgment. God, he said, will set men on his right hand and on his left, as the sheep and the goats might be divided by a shepherd, and he will say to those on the one hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and to those on the other, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." And when they ask why, he will reply, You shall go into everlasting punishment because you did not feed the hungry, you did not clothe the naked, you did not visit the sick and the imprisoned; and, You shall go into everlasting life because you did feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and visit the sick and the imprisoned.[1]

This, Christ's teaching, was emphasized by his example. He was not a priest. He went to the Temple and the Temple feasts, but apparently because the people crowded there and thus afforded him an opportunity for teaching. He never, so far as we have any account, sacrificed for himself. Again and again he told men their sins were forgiven them, and never told them to offer a sacrifice for their sins. Once, indeed, he sent a leper to the Temple, but it was because the priest was the health officer of that time, and the leper must have a clean bill of health from the priest before he could go back into society.

[1] Matt. xiii, 3–9, 45, 46, xxv, 14–46; Luke x, 30–37, xv, 11–32, xvi, 19–31.

The life of Jesus Christ was not spent in ceremonial observance; it was spent in going about doing good. He gave himself to his fellow men. He fed the hungry, comforted the sorrowing, helped the discouraged, instructed the ignorant. Never, within the limits of the human strength which was given to him, did he refuse aid to those who came to him for aid. No barrier could separate him from his fellow men. It was deemed in that time irreligious to teach pagans. He taught pagans as well as Jews. It was considered indecorous to preach religion to women; he never hesitated to preach to women. No moral degradation was sufficient to separate man or woman from his sympathy. The woman that was a sinner, the woman that to-day scarce any man is willing to recognize as a hopeful object of redemption, to her he brought the words of hope; to her he said, "Thy sins are forgiven: go in peace." [1]

In these teachings of Christ concerning man's relation to his fellow men, there are five great laws of life which he inculcated. Let us look at them separately.[2]

First was the principle of human brotherhood: "All ye are brethren," and "One is your Father which is in heaven." That motto which has come into our American industrial life might well be

[1] Matt. ix, 9–13; Luke vii, 36–50; John viii, 2–11.

[2] These laws of the Christian life I have treated more fully in *Christianity and Social Problems.*

founded on his teaching, for it expresses his spirit, "An injury to one is an injury to all." But he taught it with a far wider application than is common in our time. The injury to one laborer is an injury to other laborers; but it is also an injury to the capitalist. The injury to one capitalist is an injury to other capitalists; it is also an injury to the laborer. Whatever builds up the interest of the one class builds up the interest of the other; whatever injures the interest of the one injures the interest of the other. We are one great corporate body, one universal brotherhood. And the basis for this doctrine is a religious basis. It is easy to understand why I am brother to the man whom I meet in daily social intercourse, to the man who worships in the same church with me, to the American born on the same soil and having the same blood in his veins; but why am I brother to the man in a wholly different social circle, to the Jew, the pagan, the unbeliever, to the stranger and foreigner, to those men who are outside my life and never come in touch with me? Why? Because we are children of one Father which is in heaven. The fatherhood of God — without that there is no brotherhood of man; and without the brotherhood of man there is no fatherhood of God. The two go together; the one cannot be separated from the other.

The second great law that Jesus enunciated was the Golden Rule of honesty; and he enunciated it in these words: "All things whatsoever ye would

that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."[1] That is not, as it is sometimes called, a law of love; it is a law of justice. Who am I that I should demand of my neighbor what I would not give to him if we were to change places? Equity demands that anything which I ask of him I should be ready to give to him, and anything which I should be willing to ask of him if we changed places, he has a right to ask of me. This is not charity, this is justice. It is expressed in the familiar motto, Put yourself in his place. It is a very simple principle, and it is very easy of application. What are the duties of the preacher and pastor? What he would wish of his pastor if he were a layman in the pew. What are the duties of the doctor? What he would desire if he were the patient and the doctor came to see him. What does the lawyer owe to the client? What he would desire of his lawyer if he were the client. What are the duties of the workingman? What, if he were the employer, he would ask of his workingman. What are the duties of the capitalist? What he would expect the capitalist to do for him if he were a laboring man. What does the mistress owe the cook in her kitchen? They are sisters, one in the kitchen, one in the parlor: let each put herself in the other's place and then ask and answer the question. This is Christ's law of honesty: Whatever you would demand of another, that you owe to

[1] Matt. vii, 12.

him. It is a ploughshare that runs deep, and were it to run through American society it would be found in many respects revolutionary; but no man can question its inherent and absolute justice.

The third law of righteousness which Christ propounded is that property is a trust. There is a familiar motto, What is mine is my own. That Jesus Christ emphatically denied. All wealth is really common wealth. Every man is contributing to his neighbor, whether he will or whether he will not. How many men contributed to make the breakfast we ate this morning! Our coffee came from Mexico, our sugar from Louisiana, our milk from Orange County, our beefsteak from Chicago, and our wheat bread from Minneapolis. How many contributed to make the clothes we wear! How many men are dead who contributed to make this contribution possible! How many lives have been sunk in making the great flour mill in Minneapolis! How many lives in making the loom that wove our garments! Can we pay the dead? Can we pay even the living? Every man is debtor to every other man. As well might one spring that has contributed to the Croton reservoir claim its own separate drops of water, and say, These are mine, as for any man to say, What has come into my possession even by my industry I have made myself. No man ever made his wealth; be it little or much, the whole world has contributed to make it.

Communism affirms that inasmuch as all prop-

erty is made in common, all property should be administered in common. Christ drew no such deduction; neither did he condemn it. He said nothing against men's administering their property in common, he said nothing in favor of it; he simply said that all property is a trust, and whatever man has, be it little or be it much, he holds it in trust for his fellow men.[1] It is said of a great railroad magnate that he is worth a hundred million dollars or more. What does that mean? It simply means that he is the administrator of an enormous trust. His wealth is not, and cannot be, expended on himself. He cannot wear more clothes at a time than his poor neighbor, nor eat more food without injuring his digestion, nor live at any one time in more houses. He has some advantages. If he is sick, he can call in what medical attendance he likes; and yet the poorest man may get the best medical attendance in our great hospitals. He can have what books he wishes to read; and yet we are coming to the time when the great public libraries will give the best books to all men. He owns a great railroad, that is, he operates a great highway; and if he is a man of honesty, he operates it for the benefit of the people. Our food, our clothes, our provisions, the products of our labor, come and go on this great highway which he owns and operates. It is a trust in his hands to administer for the benefit of the American people. That which eight-

[1] Matt. xxv, 14-30; Luke xix, 11-27.

een centuries ago was the declaration of Jesus Christ is to-day the declaration of our own courts of justice. It is not only Christianity, it is law to-day; for the courts declare that the great highway belongs to the people, and that the man who seems to own it is but a trustee and must administer it under their control and according to their direction.

The fourth law of righteousness which Christ enunciated was: He that would be greatest among you, let him be servant of all. The greatness of a man is measured by the greatness of the service he renders. Are we put into this world to see how much we can get out of it, or to see how much we can put into it? The issue is perfectly simple, and yet it is one of those alphabetic issues that, because it is so simple, men constantly forget. No man is worthy to be called a man who is not ambitious so to live that the world will be left richer and better and happier and wiser because he has lived in it. No man is worthy to be called a man who is, as a rule, idle; there is work that he can do. If he walks the streets with ragged shoes and ragged clothes, he is a tramp; if he travels the continent in Pullman cars and does nothing for the world he lives in, he is the worse tramp of the two, because with less excuse for his idleness. The unprofitable servant Christ condemned because he was unprofitable. A man or a nation is like a fruit tree; if it bears no fruit for the benefit of others, "cut it

down; why cumbereth it the ground?" The only excuse for leaving it is the hope that it may justify itself by becoming useful.[1] This world is not a grab-bag in which we are all to put our hands, some to draw a prize and some a blank. It is a great confederacy in which every man is appointed to render some service to his fellow man.

The fifth law of righteousness which Christ enunciated was the law which his greatest follower epitomized in the sentence, "Overcome evil with good." Christianity is medicinal. Christianity offers to help men to be better men; and Christ has told us how we are to accomplish that for our fellow men. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."[2] Not by wrath, not primarily nor chiefly by pain and penalty, but by love and service and self-sacrifice, is the world to be made right. The penologists are beginning themselves to accept this principle, and to recognize that we need in our country, not a system of justice which will give to every offense its proper proportion of suffering, but a system of mercy which will give to every man who has been thrust into wrong-doing by circumstances, or who has walked into wrong-doing

[1] Luke xiii, 6–9. [2] Matt. v, 43–45.

with open eyes and willing feet, an inspiration to return to virtue.

These are the five great laws which Christ enunciated as laws of social righteousness: First, the law of human brotherhood, — we are all one organic whole; second, the law of human justice, — put yourself in his place and do to your neighbor as you would have him do to you; third, the law of possession — count all property a trust to be administered for the world; fourth, the law of activity — all life is a service, and he is the greatest man who renders the greatest service; and, fifthly, the law of healing — love, not wrath.

As Jesus Christ was about to die, he called the twelve disciples about him and said to them, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." [1] His life gave to love a new significance. Not that self-sacrifice had never been known before, but never on such a scale and with such an inspiration. He did not merely love his neighbor as he loved himself; he loved men and gave himself for them. As he marched to death women followed after him weeping tears of pity, and he turned toward them with the word, "Weep not for me; weep for yourselves." The soldiers laid him on the cross and drove the nails through his quivering hands and feet. He cried for mercy, not for himself, but for the men who were nailing

[1] John xiii, 34.

him to the cross. As he hung there, the hot sun beating upon his head, the pestering gnats stinging his unprotected face, his head throbbing with unutterable anguish, he saw before him his mother and his beloved disciple; and in that hour, when he might well have looked to them for strength, he thought alone of them and their future loneliness, and when he could no longer speak a completed sentence, in broken accents he commended them each to the other's care: "Mother — look — thy son! Son — look — thy mother!" And so he died. And from that figure comes down through the ages this word, that every man might well honor and revere: As I have loved you, that so also ye love one another. This was the consummation of Christ's law of righteousness.

III. What did Jesus Christ mean by godly? What did he teach, what by his life did he exemplify concerning the relation between God and man? We are ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed. What, if anything, can we know of this Infinite and Eternal Energy? What are or may be our conscious relations to it? To these questions there are four answers which have been given by serious thinkers, and more or less widely accepted by large bodies of men.

First is the answer of agnosticism, the answer of those who reply, We can know nothing about this Infinite and Eternal Energy, except that it

exists, and that it transcends our knowledge. This answer underlies Confucianism. It is the basis of the religious philosophy of the Chinese, and of what is known in this country by the general name of the School for Ethical Culture. It may be epitomized in a sentence thus: We are and always must be ignorant concerning the character of God; therefore we would best cease trying to know him or worship him or obey him, and give ourselves to the service of our fellow men whom we can know.[1]

The second answer is that of ancient paganism. It is, that we can know this Infinite and Eternal Energy as a great and awful power, — moving towards unknown ends, to which it is conducting all things as irresistibly as the glacier, — and as impassible. It is the affirmation that there is a great power in the universe, but a power without what we are accustomed to regard as moral principles, and certainly without moral sympathies. A religion founded on this conception will be, as it always has been, a religion of fear. Plutarch has graphically portrayed it:

> Of all fears none so dazes and confounds as that of superstition. He fears not the sea that never goes to sea; nor a battle, that follows not the camp; nor robbers, that stirs not abroad; nor malicious reformers, that is a poor man; nor emulation, that leads a private life; nor earthquakes, that dwells in Gaul; nor thunderbolts, that dwells in Ethiopia; but he that dreads divine powers

[1] For a full exposition of this doctrine see John Cotter Morison: *The Service of Man.*

dreads everything, — the land, the sea, the air, the sky, the dark, the light, the sound, a silence, a dream.[1]

The third conception of this Infinite and Eternal Energy is that it is a Person, who stands related to the human race somewhat as a king stands related to his subjects. He is an awful Person, an inexorable Person, perhaps a terrible Person, but he is a just Person. He has made certain laws; they are like edicts issued by a king. We must understand them and obey them or suffer the consequences. In this conception of religion conscience comes to reinforce fear, and fear to reinforce conscience. This was the earlier Jewish conception, — God a Lawgiver; the moral laws edicts or statutes issued from God; men his subjects, who must understand his laws and obey them. But in this conception, God appears to stand apart from the world that he has made, as the mechanic stands apart from the engine which he has made; and apart from the human race which he governs, as the king stands apart from the people whom he governs. He resides in the palace; they reside in their peasant homes.

The fourth answer to our question is that God is the friend of humanity. This was the conception of the later Hebraism. It believed that God was a righteous Person, a King, but it believed that he was much more than a king. John Cotter Morison has thus, in a sentence, characterized this later Hebrew faith:

[1] Plutarch's *Morals*, i, 169, 170.

The Jew was, therefore, on a footing of familiarity and intimacy, so to speak, with his God, to which the metaphysical Greek, with his wide discourse of reason, never attained. To the Jew, God is the great companion, the profound and loving yet terrible friend of his inmost soul, with whom he holds communion in the sanctuary of his heart, to whom he turns, or should turn, in every hour of adversity or happiness.[1]

Put side by side these four conceptions of the Infinite and Eternal Energy. First: We can know nothing about this Energy: let us leave it alone and go on our way. Second: This Energy is awful, terrible, a power to be dreaded: let us appease its wrath by sacrifice and win its favor by gifts. Third: This Energy is that of a just and righteous Person, but an inexorable Lawgiver; we must conform to his laws or suffer the penalty. Fourth: He is a sympathetic Person, friendly, companionable, helpful; if we lay hold upon him rightly, he will lay hold upon us and we can count upon his assistance. These are the four great conceptions of the Infinite and Eternal Energy. What was the teaching of Jesus Christ?

He was not an agnostic. He claimed a personal acquaintance with God. He said of himself, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father." He did not look back across the centuries to find what Moses or David or Isaiah told him. He knew the Father; had personal acquaintance with

[1] John Cotter Morison: *The Service of Man*, p. 181.

him ; the relationship between him and the Father was that of intimate, confidential friendship. He conversed with the Father. He was accustomed to go into the mountain-top and spend long nights in talking with this Father. He heard what the Father had to say, and he told his disciples that the messages which he brought to them he received from the Father. He had no fear of this Father, with whom he lived in these intimate and close relationships. He never calls him the Great King, or the Holy One of Israel, or the just and righteous God, or the Infinite and Eternal Energy, or the Almighty Power: he calls him Father. I think only once in the Gospels does he address him as God, and that is when he dies upon the cross, and even then the personal relation is manifested in the cry, "My God! my God!" Jesus Christ believed that he knew the Father, that he lived intimately with the Father, that he had friendship with the Father, that he talked to the Father, that the Father talked to him. He said in one of his recorded prayers, "I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always." [1] He would no more have discussed the question whether God hears prayer than we would discuss the question whether we can talk with our friends. He was as sure of personal converse with the Father as we are sure of personal converse and communion with our earthly companions.

[1] John xi, 41, 42.

And this Father was not to him some One apart from him, some One who issued laws which he must obey if he would escape the penalty of disobedience. The will of his Father was the very sustenance of his life. He wished to do what his Father wished him to do. It was so from very childhood. In the one incident that we have recorded about him as a boy, he wondered that his father and mother should have looked anywhere else for him in the Holy City, with its architectural splendor, its shops, its processions, its crowds of people, its varied magnificence, except in the one university of the city, trying to find out his Father's will. This at the beginning of his life. And at its close almost his last prayer was, Thy will, not mine, be done.[1] A husband and wife grow up together in loving friendship. As the years go by, the color of their eyes and the very form of their features seem to change. They grow more and more into even the physical likeness of each other. They come into such closeness of relationship that the wife does not need to hear what the husband has to say, nor the husband what the wife has to say, but each, by a kind of telegraphy, perceives the wish and will of the other, through an all-mastering love. These two are one. So Christ was one with the Father, thinking the Father's thoughts, living the Father's life, loving the Father, talking with the Father.

Was this to be exceptional? On the contrary,

[1] John iv, 34; Luke ii, 49; Matt. xxvi, 42.

what he claimed for himself he taught his disciples to expect for themselves. He did not undertake to tell us about God; he undertook to introduce us to God. A little babe does not know anything about the mother, but she knows the mother. I may not know anything about God, but according to Jesus Christ, I can know God. For Jesus Christ taught that God, who is his Father, is also our Father. When his disciples asked him, How shall we come to God? he replied in substance, Tell him the things you want. You are hungry, ask him for bread; in perplexity, ask him to guide you; in temptation, ask him to make you strong, that you may put the temptation under foot; you have fallen, ask him to lift you up and put you on your feet again. He will listen to you, for he cares for you. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground and he does not know it; and you are worth a great deal more to him than sparrows. Ask your father-heart: Will you not give good gifts to your children? and do you not think that He will give good gifts to you? Do not be afraid of him; he is not one to be afraid of. Have you done wrong? Still do not be afraid of him. Have you sinned against him? Still do not be afraid of him. Have you sinned against him times and ways without number, so that you are no more worthy to be called his son? Still do not be afraid of him. To illustrate this truth Christ told the story of a boy who sinned, deliberately sinned, ran away from his father, spent his substance in riotous

living and with harlots, and never thought to turn back to his home again until he was sick, hungry, friendless, and famished; and when he returned, the father uttered no word of reproach, no word of condemnation, but welcomed him, saying, I have been waiting for you; here is the robe, the ring, the thanksgiving dinner. This was Christ's interpretation of our relation to the Infinite and the Eternal Energy from which all things proceed: that we may be one with this Father; that we may have our will attuned in accord with the Father's will; that we may live in fellowship and companionship with him; that the Father offers to pour his life into our lives that we may live. And his last prayer for his disciples was "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." This is the summary of Christ's teaching concerning God: The Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed is a loving Person, a Father who cares for his children; we can know him; we can talk with him; we can get answers from him; we can come into fellowship with him; we can live in the kind of unity with him that a husband lives with a wife, or a friend with a friend.

IV. Jesus Christ's teaching respecting the future is expressed by the phrase, "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." [1] This glory of our God

[1] So in the Revised Version.

and Saviour Jesus Christ is the consummation of his kingdom on the earth, a kingdom which Paul has defined as "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."[1]

It would be difficult to find a more hopeful teacher in history than Jesus of Nazareth. The times were indeed dark; moral life seemed to have died out of the human heart; there were no philosophers in Greece, only sophists, no prophets in Palestine, only scribes, no justice in Rome, only despotic power. In that day, to that people, the message of Jesus was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." More audacious optimism the world has never seen. And a large part of his teaching was concerned with what he called, and what his people had called before him, the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven.

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" has sometimes misled men. They have imagined heaven as a celestial sphere apart from the earth, and the kingdom of heaven as a kingdom in that celestial sphere. But the kingdom of heaven is not a kingdom *in* heaven, — it is a kingdom which is to come, on earth as it is in heaven. We speak of the "American idea." Whether we meet it in France or Germany or Italy or England, still, if it is the spirit of Americanism, we call it the American idea. We speak of the "Republic of letters," meaning by it that common life which is derived from a common experi-

[1] Rom. xiv, 17.

ence and a common enjoyment of literature. So the Master spoke of the kingdom of heaven, not as something that was to take place in heaven, but as something that was to take place on the earth, which was interpreted by the imagination which men have of heaven, and deriving its power and its spirit from heaven. What is the kingdom of the sun? It is here on earth, and is in everything that lives and moves. It sings in the bird, and waits in the egg not yet hatched; it is in the fragrant blossom and in the bud unopened; it is in the blades of grass upspringing, and in the germinant seeds just breaking through their shell in the darkness of the earth. So is the kingdom of heaven already here, — here, as the day is here when the sun begins to rise; here, as the summer is here when spring begins to come; here, as manhood is here when the babe lies in the cradle, for the man begins when he is born. The kingdom of God begins when it is first upon the earth, and it is first on the earth when the spirit of righteousness and justice and love and peace is in the hearts of men and is working its way into the institutions of men. So Christ said, The kingdom of God is among you. Look for it in the mother's love, in the hero's sacrifice, in the patriot's devotion; look for it in the honest laborer, the faithful servant, the loyal friend. It is here; it is now.

And yet it is only here in the beginning. For Jesus further taught, respecting this social order,

that it must come by a gradual process of growth. The kingdom of heaven, he said, is like a seed planted in the ground, which groweth secretly, no man knows how: first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. Out of the previous condition will grow the following condition; out of the poorer will grow the better; out of the cold earth will grow the fruit for the food of men. Christ was an evolutionist long before the word evolution was known. He never defined evolution; but he declared that the spiritual laws of the universe are the same as the physical laws of the universe; that as the plant grows gradually from the lower to the higher, from the simpler to the more complex, so must the kingdom of God grow. Little by little, according to him, the world was to grow better; by no sudden, no revolutionary, no cataclysmic force. Those of us who have believed in the Master sometimes grow weary of waiting, and wonder if the dawn will ever come; but we ought not to be surprised at the delay. He gave us fair warning. Again and again he told his disciples that the process would be a long and slow one.

But not only is this kingdom of God coming gradually; it has to fight its way. When love comes into the world, will not every man welcome love? Will not all men throw open their doors and say, Come into our homes? Will not industry open its doors and say, Come into our factories? Will not every heart say, Come in and

rule in me? Alas, no! Love finds wrong, and fights against wrong, and wrong arms itself to kill love. Love sets itself in battle array against what men call vested rights, but which should be called vested wrongs, and vested wrongs arm themselves to crucify love. It was so then; it always has been so. And Christ foretold it. Do not expect, he says, that you will be better treated than I have been. They have called me Beelzebub; they will call you Beelzebub. They have persecuted me; they will persecute you. They have reviled and maligned me; they will revile and malign you. Woe unto you when all men speak well of you. If that time comes, be sure you are not doing a good work in the world.

He told us that the kingdom of God would have to battle against the inertia and the laziness of men, against the dull content that says, What was good enough for our grandfathers is good enough for us; against the spirit that says, What has been must be. The kingdom of God, he said, is like a little leaven — the ancient yeast — that is put into a lump of dough. It takes time for it to pervade the lump of dough; time for it to change the character of the lump of dough; and it can do it only by fermentation and agitation. So Christ himself had to battle against this inertia in his own disciples. They did not understand him. He looked upon them sometimes with pathetic sadness, saying, Shall the Son of man find faith on the earth

when he returns? How long have I been with you, and you have not understood me! It has been well said, when he talked in parables they thought he was talking literally; when he talked literally they thought he was talking in parables. He had to work his way into the hearts of men through parables despite them. Having ears, he said, they hear not; and eyes, they see not; and hearts, they cannot understand. It was so then; it is so now; it will be so till the end is achieved. Truth makes its way against the inertia of mankind.

But not only that, it makes its way also against open opposition. Christ compared the kingdom of heaven to wheat sown in the field; and when men went out to cultivate the wheat, they found tares growing by the side of the wheat. They said, Shall we not pull up the tares? No, replied the householder; if you do, you will uproot good wheat; let them both grow together, the good and the evil. That is a part of the history of the kingdom of God; both grow together, the evil with the good. Increased civilization brings increased temptations, and increased temptations bring increased vices. Man never experienced *delirium tremens* until some one invented distilled liquors. There could not be forgery until men learned how to write; nor murder by poisoning until men learned chemistry; nor embezzlement until there was a credit system. Evil grows with the good, and evil fights the good, in the individual, in the community.

One other thing which Jesus Christ taught, and which often men have failed to note, is that God seemingly leaves men to fight the battle for themselves. The Master said in one of his parables that the kingdom of heaven is like a nobleman going away into a far country, and leaving his estate in the charge of his stewards. He has gone: I want instructions how to pursue my work, but there is no telegraph wire. I want to be told what I shall do, but there is no mail. I want authority. He says: You have it in yourself. I put this estate in your hands: make the best you can out of it. That is Christ's own figure of the kingdom of God.

Sometimes this seems to us hard: sometimes we wish that he would come and by some sudden and wonderful revelation of power transform society, put an end to the injustice and wrong of life, and put righteousness and good-will in their place; or at least, that he would tell us exactly what to do and how to do it. But this he does not do; and the Master has told us that this he will not do. He throws the responsibility of life upon us, and leaves us to fight the battle out and reach the result by our own strong effort. Strange! and yet we are learning that this is the only way. We are learning in our colleges and higher institutions of learning to throw the responsibility on the college boys, who used to be watched, with tutors and guardians and monitors, to see that they did their work aright.

We are learning, in politics, to trust the government to the people, and not to a few men watching over the people, ruling the people, or acting for the people. Does Christ not say that he is with us always, even unto the end of the world? Surely. Are we to come back to that notion of an absentee God from which Christianity has led us out into the freedom of fellowship with the living God? Surely not. But he is not a father confessor to whom we go with our hard problems and come away with solutions ready made. His presence is not to solve our problems for us, but to inspire us to solve our own; not to bear our burdens for us, but to strengthen us with patience that we may bear our own; not to take our temptations from us, but to fill us with a courage to be ourselves conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved us. He holds himself apparently apart. No eye sees him; no ear hears his voice; no telegram from him brings instructions; no letter brings us word what we are to do. We blunder on, but by the blundering we learn wisdom; by failures we hew our own way to success; by our mistakes, our errors, yes, even by our very sins, we grow in character — and character is everything.

This, then, is what Christ said about the future: There is a new régime yet to come. It has begun already. Time will be required to work it out. It will have to be worked out by yourselves, against your own inertia, against your own blunders, against

opposition of others, against the opposition that will spring up in yourself.

Did he say nothing of personal immortality? Yes! but much less than men have sometimes imagined. He spoke not as a higher animal to higher animals, but as a Son of God to sons of God. He told his disciples once that "he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." There is no dying, only transition, a passing through the curtain to the other realm that is close at hand. He told his disciples that this world is not the only dwelling-place in the universe; in it are many dwelling-places, and there will be a place for us beyond.[1] When sometimes the worker grows weary and the soldier faint-hearted, or his little life comes toward its end, and he looks back and sees how little he has done or can do for others about him, and then looks forward to see into what kind of life his children are launched and in what kind of conflict they are to take part — then, in that hour, he may take comfort from the reflection that, having done his little here, the end is not, but there is another life out of which he can still put forth influences for the redemption and the upbuilding of humanity. And when the grave covers all that he can see of the one he loved and lived with here on earth, he then can take hope from the faith that it covers only what he saw, and that that which he really loved and which was invisible, — the love, the faith, the patience, the long-suffering, the gentle-

[1] John xi, 23–26, xiv, 1–3.

ness, the courage, — these invisible things that made her what she was, these death cannot touch.

"We know in part and we prophesy in part" and "we see through a glass darkly." No one disciple can do more than give a partial interpretation of a teaching so fundamental in its principles, and capable of such an infinite variety of applications, that nineteen centuries of study have not yet exhausted it; and no disciple can portray more than one aspect of a character so infinite in its perfections that after nineteen centuries of spiritual growth it still remains the unapproached ideal for all humanity. This chapter is not and does not pretend to be a complete answer to the question, What is Christianity? But this I believe may be safely said: No man is a Christian minister, whatever his ecclesiastical ordination, and however sound his theological orthodoxy, unless he possesses the spirit of sobriety, which puts the inner life above outward possessions, and measures all things by their spiritual values; unless he possesses the spirit of righteousness, which counts life an opportunity for service, and no life well spent which is not spent for others; unless he possesses the spirit of godliness, which knows the living God as a Companion, a Friend, a Helper and Saviour; unless he possesses the spirit of hopefulness for himself and for his fellow men, which enkindles for them and in them an exhaustless and expectant aspiration. And he

is a Christian minister, whatever his church and whatever his philosophy, if he possesses this spirit and gives himself to the endeavor to impart it to his fellow men. For Christianity is such a perception of the Infinite manifested in Jesus Christ as tends to produce Christlikeness of character, and a Christian minister is one who, inspired by that perception, imparts that Christlikeness of life to those to whom he ministers.

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